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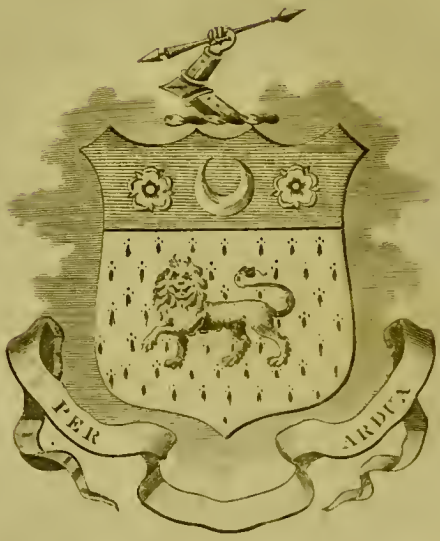

Ferdinand. Hr. Hall esqr

By Francis William Bloggler

7685
Frances Wilson

PARIS

AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS;

OR

A Sketch of the French Capital,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION,

WITH RESPECT TO

SCIENCES,
LITERATURE,
ARTS,
RELIGION,

EDUCATION,
MANNERS,
AND
AMUSEMENTS;

COMPRISING ALSO

A correct Account of the most remarkable National Establishments and Public Buildings.

In a Series of Letters,

WRITTEN BY AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER,

DURING THE YEARS 1801–2,

TO A FRIEND IN LONDON.

Ipsâ varietate tentamus efficere, ut alia aliis, quædem fortasse omnibus placeant.

PLIN. Epist.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY AND FOR C. AND R. BALDWIN, NEW BRIDGE-STREET, BLACKFRIARS.

1803.

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☞ *The* Errata *of this volume will be found at the beginning of Vol. I, immediately after the Contents; and as some of them may affect the sense, the Reader is requested not to neglect to mark them with a pen or pencil.*

A

SKETCH OF PARIS,

&c. &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Paris, December 23, 1801.

AN establishment at once deserving of the attention of men of feeling, particularly of those who, in cultivating literature, apply themselves to the science of metaphysics and grammar; an establishment extremely interesting to every one, the great difficulties of which mankind had, repeatedly, in the course of ages, endeavoured to encounter, and which had driven to despair all those who had ventured to engage in the undertaking; an establishment, in a word, which produces the happiest effects, and in a most wonderful manner, is the

NATIONAL INSTITUTION
OF THE DEAF AND DUMB.

To the most religious of philanthropists is France indebted for this sublime discovery, and

the Abbé Sicard, a pupil of the inventor, the Abbé de l'Epée, has carried it to such a degree of perfection, that it scarcely appears possible to make any further progress in so useful an undertaking. And, in fact, what can be wanting to a species of instruction the object of which is to establish between the deaf and dumb, and the man who hears and speaks, a communication like that established between all men by the knowledge and practice of the same idiom; when the deaf and dumb man, by the help of the education given him, succeeds in decomposing into phrases the longest period; into simple propositions, the most complex phrase; into words, each proposition; into simple words, words the most complex: and when he distinguishes perfectly words derived from primitives; figurative words from proper ones; and when, after having thus decomposed the longest discourse, he recomposes it; when, in short, the deaf and dumb man expresses all his ideas, all his thoughts, and all his affections; when he answers, like men the best-informed, all questions put to him, respecting what he knows through the nature of his intelligence, and respecting what he has learned, either from himself or from him who has enlightened his understanding? What wish remains to be formed, when the deaf and dumb man is enabled to learn by himself a foreign language, when he translates it, and

writes it, as well as those of whom it is the mother-tongue?

Such is the phenomenon which the Institution of the deaf and dumb presents to the astonishment of Europe, under the direction, or rather under the regeneration of the successor of the celebrated Abbé de l'Epée. His pupils realize every thing that I have just mentioned. They write English and Italian as well as they do French. Nothing equals the justness and precision of their definitions.

Nor let it be imagined that they resemble birds repeating the tunes they have learned. Never have they been taught the answer to a question. Their answers are always the effect of their good logic, and of the ideas of objects and of qualities of beings, acquired by a mind which the Institutor has formed from the great art of observation.

This institution was far short of its present state of perfection at the death of the celebrated inventor, which happened on the 23d of December 1789. During the long career of their first father, the deaf and dumb had been able to find means only to write, under the dictation of signs, words whose import was scarcely known to them. When endeavours were made to make them emerge from the confined sphere of the first wants, not one of them knew how to express

in writing any thing but ideas of sense and wants of the first necessity. The nature of the verb, the relations of tenses, that of other words comprehended in the phrase, and which form the syntax of languages, were utterly unknown to them. And, indeed, how could they answer the most trifling question? Every thing in the construction of a period was to them an enigma.

It was not long before the successor of the inventor discovered the defect of this instruction, which was purely mechanical and acquired by rote. He thought he perceived this defect in the *concrete* verb, in which the deaf and dumb, seeing only a single word, were unable to distinguish two ideas which are comprehended in it, that of affirmation and that of quality. He thought he perceived also that defect in the expression of the qualities, always presented, in all languages, out of the subjects, and never in the noun which they modify; and, by the help of a process no less simple than ingenious and profound, he has made the deaf and dumb comprehend the most arduous difficulty, the nature of abstraction; he has initiated them in the art of generalizing ideas by presenting to them the adjective in the noun, as the quality is in the object, and the quality subsisting alone and out of the object, having no support but in the mind, for him who considers it, and but in the abstract noun for him who reads

the expression of it. He has, in like manner, separated the verb from the quality in concrete verbs, and communicated to the deaf and dumb the knowledge of the true verb, which he has pointed out to them in the termination of all the French verbs, by reattaching to the subject, by a line agreed on, its verbal quality. This line he has translated by the verb *to be*, the only verb recognized by philosophic grammarians.

These are the two foundations of this very extraordinary source of instruction, and on which all the rest depend. The pronouns are learned by nouns; the tenses of conjugation, by the three absolute tenses of conjugation of all languages; and these, by this line, so happily imagined, which is a sign of the present when it connects the verbal quality and the subject, a sign of the past when it is intersected, a sign of the future when it is only begun.

All the conjugations are reduced to a single one, as are all the verbs. The adverbs considered as adjectives, when they express the manner, and as substitutes for a preposition and its government, when they express time or place, &c. The preposition represented as a mean of transmitting the influence of the word which precedes it to that which follows it; the articles serving, as in the English language, to determine the extent of a common noun. Such is a summary of the

grammatical system of the Institutor of the deaf and dumb.

It is the metaphysical part, above all, which, in this institution, is carried to such a degree of simplicity and clearness, that it is within reach of understandings the most limited. And, indeed, one ought not to be astonished at the rapid progress of the deaf and dumb in the art of expressing their ideas and of communicating in writing with every speaker, as persons absent communicate with each other by similar means. In the space of eighteen months, a pupil begins to give an account in writing of the actions of which he is rendered a witness, and, in the space of five years, his education is complete.

The objects in which the deaf and dumb are instructed, are Grammar, the notions of Metaphysics and Logic, which the former renders necessary, Religion, the Use of the Globes, Geography, Arithmetic, general notions of History, ancient and modern, of Natural History, of Arts and Trades, &c.

These unfortunates, restored by communication to society, from which Nature seemed to have intended to exclude them, are usefully employed. One of their principal occupations is a knowledge of a mechanical art. Masters in the most ordinary arts are established in the house of the deaf and dumb, and every one there

finds employment in the art which best suits his inclination, his strength, and his natural disposition. In this school, which is established at the extremity of the *Faubourg St. Jacques*, is a printing-office, where some are employed as compositors; others, as pressmen. In a preparatory drawing-school they are taught the rudiments of painting, engraving, and Mosaic, for the last of which there are two workshops. There is also a person to teach engraving on fine grained stones, as well as a joiner, a tailor, and a shoemaker. The garden, which is large, is cultivated by the deaf and dumb. Almost every thing that is used by them is made by themselves. They make their own bedsteads, chairs, tables, benches, and clothes. The deaf and dumb females too make their shirts, and the rest of their linen.

Thus their time is so taken up that, with the exception of three hours devoted to moral instruction, all the rest is employed in manual labour.

Such is this establishment, where the heart is agreeably affected at the admirable spectacle which presents at once every thing that does the most honour to human intelligence, in the efforts which it has been necessary to make in order to overcome the obstacles opposed to its development by the privation of the sense the most useful, and that of the fa-

culty the most essential to the communication of men with one another, and the sight of the physical power employed in seeking, in arts and trades, resources which render men independent.

But to what degree are these unfortunates deaf, and why are they dumb?

It is well known that they are dumb because they are deaf, and they are more or less deaf, when they are so only by accident, in proportion as the auditory nerve is more or less braced, or more or less relaxed. In various experiments made on sound, some have heard sharp sounds, and not grave ones; others, on the contrary, have heard grave sounds, and not sharp ones.

All would learn, were it deemed expedient to teach them, the mechanism of speech. But, besides that the sounds which they would utter, would never be heard by themselves, and they would never be conscious of having uttered them, those sounds would be to those who might listen to them infinitely disagreeable. Never could they be of use to them in conversing with us, and they would serve only to counteract their instruction.

Woe be to the deaf and dumb whom it should be proposed to instruct by teaching them to speak! How, in fact, can the development of the understanding be assisted by teaching them a mechanism which has no object or destina-

tion, when the thought already formed in the mind, by the help of signs which fix the ideas, restores not the mechanism of speech?

Of this the Institutor has been fully sensible, and, although in his public lessons, he explains all the efforts of the vocal instrument or organ of the voice, and proves that he could, as well as any other man, teach the deaf and dumb to make use of it, all his labour is confined to exercising the instrument of thought, persuaded that every thing will be obtained, when the deaf and dumb shall have learned to arrange their ideas, and to think.

It is then only that the Institutor gives lessons of analysis. But, how brilliant are they! You think yourself transported into a class of logic. The deaf and dumb man has ceased to be so. A contest begins between him and his master. All the spectators are astonished; every one wishes to retain what is written on both sides. It is a lesson given to all present.

Every one is invited to interrogate the deaf and dumb man, and he answers to any person whatsoever, with a pen or pencil in his hand, and in the same manner puts a question. He is asked, "What is Time?"—"Time," says the dumb pupil, "is a portion of duration, the "nature of which is to be successive, to have "commenced, and consequently to have passed,

" and to be no more; to be present, and to " be so through necessity. Time," adds he, " is the fleeting or the future." As if in the eyes of the dumb there was nothing real in Time but the future.—" What is eternity?" says another to him—" It is a day without " yesterday, or to-morrow," replies the pupil.— " What is a sense?"—" It is a vehicle for " ideas."—" What is duration?"—" It is a " line which has no end, or a circle."—" What " is happiness?"—" It is a pleasure which never " ceases."—" What is God?"—" The author " of nature, the sun of eternity."—" What is " friendship?"—" The affection of the mind." —" What is gratitude?—" The memory of the " heart."

There are a thousand answers of this description, daily collected at the lessons of the deaf and dumb by those who attend them, and which attest the superiority of this kind of instruction over the common methods. Thus, this institution is not only, in regard to beneficence and humanity, deserving of the admiration of men of feeling, it merits also the observation of men of superior understanding and true philosophers, on account of the ingenious process employed here to supply the place of the sense of seeing by that of hearing, and speech by gesture and writing.

I must not conceal from my countrymen, above all, that the Institutor, in his public lessons, formally declares, that it is by giving to the French language the simple form of ours, and accommodating to it our syntax, he has been chiefly successful in making the deaf and dumb understand that of their own country. I must also add, that it is no more than a justice due to the Institutor to say that, in the midst of the concourse of auditors, who press round him, and who offer him the homage due to his genius and philanthropy, he shews for all the English an honourable preference, acknowledging to them, publicly, that this attention is a debt which he discharges in return for the asylum that we granted to the unfortunate persons of his profession, who, emigrating from their native land, came among us to seek consolation, and found another home.

Should ever this feeble sketch of so interesting an institution reach SICARD, that religious philosopher, who belongs as much to every country in the world as to France, the land which gave him birth, he will find in it nothing more than the expression of the gratitude of one Englishman; but he may promise himself that as soon as the definitive treaty of peace shall have reopened a free intercourse between the two nations, the sentiments contained in it will

be adopted by all the English who shall witness the extraordinary success of his profoundly-meditated labours. They will all hasten to pay their tribute of admiration to a man, whose most gratifying reward consists in the benefits which he has had the happiness to confer on that part of his fellow-creatures from whom Nature has withheld her usual indulgence.

LETTER XXXIX.

Paris, December 25, 1801.

Much has been said of the general tone of immorality now prevailing in this capital, and so much, that it becomes necessary to look beyond the surface, and examine whether morals be really more corrupt here at the present day than before the revolution. To investigate the subject through all its various branches and ramifications, would lead me far beyond the limits of a letter. I shall therefore, as a criterion, take a comparative view of the increase or decrease of the different classes of women, who, either publicly or privately, deviate from the paths of virtue. If we begin with the lowest rank, and ascend, step by step, to the highest, we first meet with those un-

fortunate creatures, known in France by the general designation of

PUBLIC WOMEN.

Their number in Paris, twelve years ago, was estimated at thirty thousand; and if this should appear comparatively small, it must be considered how many amorous connexions here occupy the attention of thousands of men, and consequently tend to diminish the number of *public* women.

The question is not to ascertain whether it be necessary, for the tranquillity of private families, that there should be public women. Who can fairly estimate the extent of the mischief which they produce, or of that which they obviate? Who can accurately determine the best means for bringing the good to overbalance the evil? But, supposing the necessity of the measure, would it not be proper to prevent, as much as possible, that complete mixture by which virtuous females are often confounded with impures?

Charlemagne, though himself a great admirer of the sex, was of that opinion. He had, in vain, endeavoured to banish entirely from Paris women of this description, by ordering that they should be condemned to be publicly whipped, and that those who harboured them, should carry them on their shoulders to the place where the sentence

was put in execution. But it was not a little singular that, while the emperor was bent on reforming the morals of the frail fair, his two daughters, the princesses Gifla and Rotrude, were indulging in all the vicious foibles of their nature.

Charlemagne, who then resided in the *Palais des Thermes*, situated in the *Rue de la Harpe*, happened to rise one winter's morning much earlier than usual. After walking for some time about his room, he went to a window which looked into a little court belonging to the palace. How great was his astonishment, when, by the twilight, he perceived his second daughter, Rotrude, with Eginhard, his prime minister, on her back, whom she was carrying through the deep snow which had fallen in the night, in order that the foot-steps of a man might not be traced.

When Lewis the *débonnaire*, his successor, ascended the throne, he undertook to reform these two princesses, whose father's fondness had prevented him from suffering them to marry. The new king began by putting to death two noblemen who passed for their lovers, thinking that this example would intimidate, and that they would find no more: but it appears that he was mistaken, for they were never at a loss. Nor is this to be wondered at, as these princesses to a taste for literature joined a very lively imagination,

and were extremely affable, generous, and beneficent; on which account, says Father Daniel, they died universally regretted.

Experience having soon proved that public women are a necessary evil in great cities, it was resolved to tolerate them. They therefore began to form a separate body, became subject to taxes, and had their statutes and judges. They were called *femmes amoureuses, filles folles de leur corps*, and, on St. Magdalen's day, they were accustomed to form annually a solemn procession. Particular streets were assigned to them for their abode; and a house in each street, for their commerce.

A penitentiary asylum, called *les Filles Dieu*, was founded at Paris in 1226, and continued for some years open for the reception of *female sinners who had gone astray, and were reduced to beggary*. In the time of St. Lewis, their number amounted to two hundred; but becoming rich, they became dissolute, and in 1483, they were succeeded by the reformed nuns of Fontevrault.

When I was here in the year 1784, a great concourse of people daily visited this convent in order to view the body of an ancient virgin and martyr, said to be that of St. Victoria, which, having been lately dug up near Rome, had just been sent to these nuns by the Pope. This relic being exposed for some time to the veneration and curiosity of the Parisian public, the devout

wondered to see the fair saint with a complexion quite fresh and rosy, after having been dead for several centuries, and, in their opinion, this was a miracle which incontestably proved her sanctity. The incredulous, who did not see things in the same light, thought that the face was artificial, and that it presented one of those holy frauds which have so frequently furnished weapons to impiety. But they were partly mistaken: the nuns had thought proper to cover the face of the saint with a mask, and to clothe her from head to foot, in order to skreen from the eyes of the public the hideous spectacle of a skeleton.

In 1420, Lewis VIII, with a view of distinguishing impures from modest women, forbade the former to wear golden girdles, then in fashion. This prohibition was vain, and the virtuous part of the sex consoled themselves by the testimony of their conscience, whence the old proverb: "*Bonne rénommée* "*vaut mieux que ceinture dorée.*"

Another establishment, first called *Les Filles pénitentes ou repenties*, and afterwards *Filles de St. Magloire*, was instituted in 1497 by a Cordelier, and had the same destination. He preached against libertinism, and with such success, that two hundred dissolute women were converted by his fervent eloquence. The friar admitted them into his congregation, which was sanc-

tioned by the Pope. Its statutes, which were drawn up by the Bishop of Paris, are not a little curious. Among other things, it was established, that " none should be received but " women who had led a dissolute life, and " that, in order to ascertain the fact, they " should be examined by matrons, who should " swear on the Holy Evangelists to make a " faithful report."

There can be no doubt that women were well taken care of in this house, since it was supposed that virtue even might assume the mask of vice to obtain admission. The fact is singular. " To prevent girls from prosti- " tuting themselves in order to be received, " those who shall have been once examined and " refused, shall be excluded for ever.

" Besides, the candidates shall be obliged to " swear, under penalty of their eternal damna- " tion, in presence of their confessor and six " nuns, that they did not prostitute themselves " with a view of entering into this congrega- " tion; and in order that women of bad cha- " racter may not wait too long before they " become converted, in the hope that the door " will always be open to them, none will be " received above the age of thirty."

This community, for some years, continued

tolerably numerous; but its destination had been changed long before the suppression of convents, which took place in the early part of the revolution. All the places of public prostitution in Paris, after having been tolerated upwards of four hundred years, were abolished by a decree of the States General, held at Orleans in 1560. The number of women of the town, however, was far from being diminished, though their profession was no longer considered as a trade; and as they were prohibited from being any where, that is, in any fixed place, they were compelled to spread themselves every where.

At the present day, the number of these women in Paris is computed at twenty-five thousand: they are taken up as formerly, in order to be sent into infirmaries, whence they, generally, come out only to return to their former habits. Twelve years ago, those apprehended underwent a public examination once a month, and were commonly sentenced to a confinement, more or less long, according to the pleasure of the minister of the police. The examination of them became a matter of amusement for persons of not over-delicate feelings. The hardened females, neither respecting the judge nor the audience, impudently repeated the language and gestures of their traffic. The judge

added a fortnight's imprisonment for every insult, and the most abandoned were confined only a few months longer in the *Salpétrière.*

Endeavours have since been made to improve the internal regulation of this and similar houses of correction; but, as far as my information goes, with little success. For want of separating, from the beginning of their confinement, the most debauched from those whom a moment of distress or error has thrown into these scenes of depravity, the contamination of bad example rapidly spreads, and those who enter dissolute, frequently come out thievish; while all timidity is banished from the mind of the more diffident. Besides, it is not always the most culpable who fall into the hands of the police, the more cunning and experienced, by contriving to come to terms with its agents, employed on these errands, generally escape; and thus the object in view is entirely defeated.

On their arrival at the *Salpétrière,* the healthy are separated from the diseased; and the latter are sent to *Bicêtre,* where they either find a cure or death. Your imagination will supply the finishing strokes of this frightful picture.——These unfortunate victims of indigence or of the seduction of man, are deserving of compassion. With all their vices, they have, after all, one less than many of their sex who pride themselves on chas-

tity, without really possessing it; that is, hypocrisy. As they shew themselves to be what they really are, they cannot make the secret mischief which a detected prude not unfrequently occasions under the deceitful mask of modesty. Degraded in their own eyes, and being no longer able to reign through the graces of virtue, they fall into the opposite extreme, and display all the audaciousness of vice.

The next class we come to is that which was almost honoured by the Greeks, and tolerated by the Romans, under the denomination of

COURTESANS.

By courtesans, I mean those ladies who, decked out in all the luxury of dress, if not covered with diamonds, put up their favours to the highest bidder, without having either more beauty or accomplishments, perhaps, than the distressed female who sells hers at the lowest price. But caprice, good fortune, intrigue, or artifice, sometimes occasions an enormous distance between women who have the same views.

If the ancients made great sacrifices for the Phrynes, the Laïses, or the Aspasias of the day, among the moderns, no nation has, in that respect, surpassed the French. Every one has heard of the luxurious extravagance of Mademoiselle Deschamps, the cushion of whose *chaise-percée*,

was trimmed with point-lace of very considerable value, and the harness of whose carriage was studded with paste, in imitation of diamonds. This woman, however, lived to repent of her folly; and if she did not literally die in a poor-house, she at least ended her days in wretchedness.

Before the revolution, of all the gay ladies in Paris, Madame Grandval displayed the greatest luxury in her equipage; and Mademoiselle D'Hervieux, in her house. I knew them both. The former I have seen at Longchamp, as well as at the annual review of the king's household troops, in a splendid coach, as fine as that of any Lord Mayor, drawn by a set of eight English grays, which cost a hundred and twenty guineas a horse. She sat, like a queen, adorned with a profusion of jewels; and facing her was a *dame de compagnie*, representing a lady of the bedchamber. Behind the carriage, stood no less than three tall footmen, besides a chasseur, in the style of that of the Duke of Gloucester, in rich liveries, with swords, canes, and bags.

As for the house of Mademoiselle D'Hervieux, it was every thing that oriental luxury, combined with French taste, could unite on a small scale. Although of very low origin, and by no means gifted with a handsome person, this lady, after having, rather late in life, obtained an introduction

on the opera-stage as a common *figurante*, contrived to insinuate herself into the good graces of some rich protectors. On the *Chaussée d'Antin*, they built for her this palace in miniature, which, twelve years ago, was the object of universal admiration, and, in fact, was visited by strangers as one of the curiosities of Paris.

At the present day, one neither sees nor hears of such favourites of fortune; and, for want of subjects to paint under this head, I must proceed to those of the next rank, who are styled

KEPT WOMEN.

What distinctions, what shades, what different names to express almost one and the same thing! From the haughty fair in a brilliant equipage, figuring, like a favourite Sultana, with "all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance" of the toilet, down to the hunger-pinched female, who stands shivering in the evening at the corner of a street, what gradations in the same profession!

Before the revolution, there were reckoned in Paris eight or ten thousand women to whom the rich nobility or financiers allowed from a thousand pounds a year upwards to an almost incredible amount. Some of these ladies have ruined a whole family in the short space of six months; and, having no-

thing left at the year's end, were then under the necessity of parting with their diamonds for a subsistence. Although many of them are far inferior in opulence to the courtesans, they are less depraved, and, consequently, superior to them in estimation. They have a lover, who pays, and from whom they, in general, get all they can, at the same time turning him into ridicule, and another whom, in their turn, they pay, and for whom they commit a thousand follies.

These women used to have no medium in their attachments; they were either quite insensible to the soft passion, or loved almost to distraction. On the wane, they had the rage for marrying, and many of them found men who, preferring fortune to honour, disgraced themselves by such alliances. Some of these ladies, if handsome, were not unfrequently taken by a man of fortune, and kept from mere ostentation, just as he would sport a superlatively elegant carriage, or ride a very capital horse; others were maintained from caprice, which, like Achilles's spear, carried with it its own antidote; and then, of course, they passed into the hands of different keepers. It cannot be denied, however, that a few of these connexions were founded on attachment; and when the woman, who was the object of it, was possessed of understanding, she assumed the manners

and deportment of a wife. Indeed, now and then a keeper adopted the style of oriental gallantry.

Beaujon, the banker of the court, who had amassed an immense fortune, indulged himself in his old age, and, till his death, in a society composed of pretty women, some of whom belonged to what was then termed good families, among which he had diffused his presents. In an elegant habitation, called *la Chartreuse*, which he erected in the *Faubourg du Roule*, as a place of occasional retirement, was a most curious apartment, representing a bower, in the midst of which was placed a bedstead in imitation of a basket of flowers: four trees, whose verdant foliage extended over part of the ceiling, which was painted as a sky, seemed to shade this basket, and supported drapery, suspended to their branches. This was M. Beaujon's Temple of Venus.

The late Prince of Soubise, for some years, constantly kept ten or a dozen ladies. The only intercourse he had with them, was to breakfast or chat with them twice or thrice a month, and latterly he maintained several old stagers, in this manner, from motives of benevolence. At the end of the month, all these ladies came in their carriages at a fixed hour, in a string, as it were, one after the other. The steward

had their money ready; they afterwards, one by one, entered a very spacious room furnished with large closets, filled with silks, muslins, laces, ribbands, &c. The prince distributed presents to each, according to her age and taste: thus ended a visit of mere ceremony, interspersed with a few words of general gallantry.

Such was the style in which many women were kept by men of fortune under the old *régime*. At the present day, if we except twenty or thirty perhaps, it would be no easy matter to discover any women supported in a style of elegance in Paris, and the lot of these seems scarcely secured but from month to month. The reason of this mystery is, that the modern Crœsuses having mostly acquired their riches in a clandestine manner, they take every possible precaution to prevent the reports in circulation concerning their ill-gotten pelf from being confirmed by a display of luxury in their *chères amies*. On this account, many a matrimonial connexion, I am told, is formed between them and women of equivocal character, on the principle, that a man is better able to check the extravagant excesses of his wife than those of his mistress.

We now arrive at that class of females who

move in a sphere of life the best calculated for making conquests. I mean

OPERA-DANCERS.

When a spectator, whose eyes are fascinated by the illusion of scenic decorations, contemplates those beauties whose voluptuous postures, under the form of Calypso, Eucharis, Delphis, &c. awaken desire in the mind of youth, and even of persons of maturer years, he forgets that the divinities before him are women, who not unfrequently lavish their favours on the common herd of mortals. His imagination lends to them a thousand secret charms which they possess not; and he cannot be persuaded that they are not tremblingly alive to a passion which they express with so much apparent feeling. It is in their arms only that he discovers his error. To arrive at this point, many an Englishman has sacrificed thousands of pounds; while his faithless fair has been indulging in all the wantonness of her disposition, perhaps, with some obscure Frenchman among the long train of her humble admirers. Hence the significant appellation of *Milord Pot-au-feu*, given to one who supports a woman whose favours another enjoys *gratis*.

Such an opera-dancer used formerly to ex-

hibit herself in a blaze of jewels in the lobby, and according to the style in which she figured, did she obtain respect from her companions. The interval between them was proportioned to the degree of opulence which the one enjoyed over the other, so that the richer scarcely appeared to belong to the same profession as the poorer. To the former, every shopkeeper became a candidate for custom; presents were heaped on presents, and gold was showered on her in such a manner that she might, for the time, almost have fancied herself a second Danaë.

In the midst of this good fortune, perhaps, an obscure rival suddenly started into fashion. She then was eclipsed by her whom, a few days before, she disdained. Instead of a succession of visiters, her house was deserted; and, at the expiration of the year, the proud fair, awakened from her golden dream by the clamours of her importunate creditors, found herself without one friend to rescue her valuables from their rapacious gripe.

No wonder, then, that this order of things (excepting the reverse by which it was sometimes followed) was very agreeable to the great majority of these capering beauties, and, doubtless, they wished its duration. For, among the reports of the *secret* police, maintained by Lewis

XVI, in 1792, it appears by a letter addressed to M. de Caylus, and found among the King's papers in the palace of the *Tuileries*, that most of the female opera-dancers were staunch *aristocrates*; but that democracy triumphed among the women who sang at that theatre. This little anecdote shews how far curiosity was then stretched to ascertain what is called public opinion; and I have no doubt that the result confirmed the correctness of the statement.

The opera-stage was certainly never so rich as it now is in first-rate female dancers, yet the frail part of these beauties were never so deficient, perhaps, in wealthy admirers. Proceeding to the next order of meretricious fair, we meet with that numerous one denominated

GRISETTES.

This is the name applied to those young girls who, being obliged to subsist by their labour, chiefly fill the shops of milliners, mantua-makers, and sellers of ready-made linen, &c.

The rank which ought to be assigned to them, I think, is between opera-dancers and demireps. You may smile at the distinction; but, as Mr. Tickle justly observes, in the Spectator, we should vary our appellations of these fair criminals, according to circumstances. "Those who offend only against themselves,"

says he, " and are not a seandal to society; " but, out of deferenee to the sober part of " the world, have so much good left in them as " to be ashamed, must not be eomprehended in " the common word due to the worst of women. " Regard is to be had to their situation when " they fell, to the uneasy perplexity in which " they lived under senseless and severe parents, " to the importunity of poverty, to the violence " of a passion in its beginning well-grounded, to " all the alleviations which make unhappy women " resign the eharacteristie of their sex, modesty. " To do otherwise than thus," adds he, " would " be to act like a pedantic Stoie, who thinks all " crimes alike, and not as an impartial SPEC- " TATOR, who views them with all the circum- " stances that diminish or enhanee the guilt."

If we measure them by this standard, *grisettes* appear entitled to be elassed immediately below demireps; for, as Lear says of his daughter,

" ———————— Not to be the worst
" Stands in some rank of praise."

Their prineipal merit eonsists in their conducting themselves with a eertain degree of decorum and reserve, and in being susceptible of attaehment. Born in an humble sphere, they are accustomed from their infancy to gain their livelihood by their industry. Like young birds that feel the

power of using their wings, they fly from the parent-nest at the age of sixteen; and, hiring a room for themselves, they live according to their means and fancy.

More fortunate in their indigence than the daughters of petty tradesmen, they overleap the limits of restraint, while their charms are in full lustre; and sometimes their happiness arises from being born in poverty. In marrying an artisan of their own class, they see nothing but distress and servitude, which are by no means compatible with their spirit of independence. Vanity becomes their guide, and is as bad a guide as distress; for it prompts them to add the resources of their youth and person to those of their needle. This double temptation is too strong for their weak virtue. They therefore seek a friend to console them on Sundays for the *ennui* of the remainder of the week, which must needs seem long, when they are sitting close at work from morning to night. In general, they are more faithful than any of the other classes of the frail part of the sex, and may be supported at little expense, and without scandal.

It would require almost the powers of the inquisition to ascertain whether *grisettes* have increased or diminished since the revolution; but their number is, and always has been, immense in Paris. An object highly deserving of the atten-

tion of the French legislators would be to find a remedy for this evil. A mortal blow should, no doubt, be struck at the luxury of the toilet; as the rage for dress has, I am convinced, undermined the virtue of as many women as the vile stratagems of all the Lotharios in being. Leaving these matters to some modern Lycurgus, I shall end my letter. But, in my eager haste to close it, I must not omit a class, which has increased in a proportion equal to the decrease of kept women. As they have no precise designation in France, I shall take the liberty of applying to them that of

DEMIREPS.

Without having the shameless effrontery of vice, these ladies have not the austere rigour of virtue. Seeing that professed courtesans insnared the most promising youths, and snatched them from other women, this description of females sprang up, in a manner, to dispute with them, under the rose, the advantages which the others derived from their traffic. If they have not the same boldness in their carriage, their looks bespeak almost as much complaisance. They declaim loudly against women of all the classes before-mentioned, for the best possible reason; because these are their more dangerous rivals. It is certain that a virtuous woman cannot hold the breach of chastity too much

in abhorrence, but every Lucretia ought to have "a tear for pity," especially towards the fallen part of her sex. Nothing can be more disgusting than to hear women, who are known to have transgressed, forget their own frailties, and rail against the more unguarded, and, consequently, more artless part of womankind, without mercy or justice.

Demireps, in general, profess the greatest disinterestedness in their connexions; but if they receive no money at the moment of granting their favours, they accept trinkets and other presents which have some value. It is not at all uncommon for a man to think that he has a *bonne fortune*, when he finds himself on terms of intimacy with such a woman. Enraptured at his success, he repeats his visits, till one day he surprises his belle, overwhelmed by despair. He eagerly inquires the cause. After much entreaty, she informs him that she has had ill luck at play, and, with anguish in her looks, laments that she is ruined beyond redemption. The too credulous admirer can do no less than accommodate her secretly with a sufficient sum to prevent her from being taken to task by her husband; and thus the disinterested lady proves, in the end, a greater drain to the gallant's pocket than the most mercenary courtesan.

The man who would wish to recommend himself to their favour, scarcely need take any further trouble than to change some of their trinkets, which are no longer in fashion. Sometimes he may meet with a husband, who, conniving at his wife's infidelity, will shew him every mark of attention. In that case, the lover is quite at home, and his presence being equally agreeable to the obliging husband as to the kind wife, when they are all three assembled, they seem to fit their several places like the three sides of an equilateral triangle.

Since the revolution, the increase of demireps is said to have diminished most sensibly the class of what are termed kept women. Indeed, it is affirmed by some, that the number of the former has, within these few years, multiplied in a tenfold proportion. Others again maintain that it is no greater than it was formerly; because, say they, the state of society in Paris is not near so favourable to amorous intrigue as that which existed under the old *régime*. Riches being more equally divided, few persons, comparatively speaking, are now sufficiently affluent to entertain large parties, and give routs, balls, and suppers, where a numerous assemblage afforded, to those inclined to dissipation, every opportunity of cultivating an intimate acquaintance. I must confess that

these reasons, assigned by some worthy Frenchmen whose opinions I respect, do not altogether accord with the result of my observation; and, without taking on myself to controvert them, I am persuaded that truth will bear me out in asserting, that, if the morals of that class of society in which I have chiefly mixed during the different periods of my stay in France, are not deteriorated, they are certainly not improved since I last visited Paris.

After having painted, in regular succession, and with colours occasionally borrowed, the general portrait of all those classes of females whose likeness every English traveller has, no doubt, met with, I must find a little corner of my canvass for a small number of women who might, probably, be sought in vain out of Paris. However great a recommendation their rarity may be in the eyes of some, still it is not the only quality that points them out to the notice of the impartial observer.

When a man has come to his senses respecting the sex, or, according to the vulgar adage, sown his wild oats, he naturally seeks a sincere friend to whom he can unbosom himself with confidence. Experience warns him that few men are to be trusted; and unless he has had the good fortune to meet with a virtuous wife, blessed with an engaging temper and a good understanding, he

must even, like Junius, be the depository of his own secret. In Paris, however, he may find one of those scarce females, who, being accustomed early in life to reflection, possess the firm mind of a man, combined with the quick sensibility of a woman.

When the illusion of the first passions is dissipated, their reason becomes unclouded. Renouncing every narrow thought, they raise themselves to the knowledge of the most weighty affairs, and, by an active observation of mankind, are accustomed to discriminate every shade of character. Hence their penetration is great; and they are capable of giving good advice on important occasions. In short, a French woman at thirty makes an excellent friend, and, attaching herself to the man she esteems, thinks no sacrifice too great for the advancement of his interest, or the security of his happiness or reputation.

The friendship between man and woman is a thousand times more sweet than that between one man and another. A woman's friendship is active, vigilant, and at the same time tender. French women cherish more sincerely their old friends than their young lovers. They may perchance deceive the lover, but never the friend; the latter they consider as a sacred being. Whence, no doubt, Rousseau (who has not spared the Parisian ladies) has been led to say:

" I would never have sought in Paris a wife,
" still less a mistress; but I would willingly have
" made there a female friend; and this treasure
" would, perhaps, have consoled me for not find-
" ing the other two."

LETTER XL.

Paris, December 27, 1801.

About thirty years ago, a public insult offered to human nature, in the person of some unfortunate blind men belonging to the Hospital of the *Quinze-vingts*, and repeated daily for the space of two months, suggested to a spectator the idea of avenging it in a manner worthy of a true philanthropist.

In a coffeehouse of the *Foire St. Ovide*, in Paris, were placed ten blind beggars, muffled up in grotesque dresses and long pointed caps, with large paste-board spectacles on their nose, without glass: music and lights were set before them; and one of them was characterized as Midas, with the ears of an ass, and the addition of a peacock's tail, spread behind him. He sang, while all the others played the same parts of a monotonous tune, without either taste or measure; and the unfeeling public turned into derision the unfor-

tunate actors in this infamous scene. This happened in September 1771.

From that moment, M. VALENTIN HAÜY, brother to the celebrated mineralogist of that name, animated by a noble enthusiasm, conceived the project of teaching the blind to write and read, and of placing in their hands books and music, printed by themselves. After employing twelve years in maturing it, at length, in 1784, he ventured to carry it into execution. To so laudable and benevolent a purpose, he devoted all his fortune; and hence originated the establishment known in Paris, since the year 1791, by the title of

NATIONAL INSTITUTION
OF THE INDUSTRIOUS BLIND.

Presently M. HAÜY found his plan seconded by the Philanthropic Society, and the benefactions and advice of several persons, no less distinguished for understanding than benevolence, contributed not a little to encourage his zeal in its prosecution. The following were the primary objects of the establishment.

1. To withdraw the blind from the dangerous paths of idleness.

2. To procure them certain means of subsistence by the execution of pleasant and easy labours.

3. To restore them to society.

4. To console them for their misfortune.

To rescue the blind from idleness is, unquestionably, of itself a great blessing, as it preserves them from an infinite number of vices, and consequently must be approved by the moralist. But another advantage, equally deserving of approbation, is to cause them to find, in their labour, an infallible resource against indigence. Previously to the execution of this beneficent plan, a young blind child, born of poor parents, was reduced to the melancholy and humiliating necessity of standing in a public thoroughfare, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, to beg its bread, and, at present, it has no occasion to owe its livelihood but to its own labour.

The children that M. Haüy had to educate were, in general, of the class of artisans, though a few belonged to that of artists and men of science. Some were born with a little aptitude for mechanical labours, others with a great disposition for the arts and sciences. These considerations naturally pointed out to him his plan of instruction, which is divided into four branches.

I. Handicraft work, viz. Spinning, knitting, making of cord, fringe, trimming, ribband, pasteboard, &c.

Task-masters direct the execution of these

works, which are as easy to the blind as to the clear-sighted.

II. Education, viz. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, literature, history, foreign languages, arts and sciences.

This education of blind children is carried on by means of raised-work or relief, and is intrusted to other blind people whose education is completed. The latter not only instruct their unfortunate fellow-sufferers, but also the clear-sighted.

The sense of feeling is so refined in blind children, that a pupil, a little informed, becomes perfectly acquainted with maps by handling them: he points out with his finger countries and towns; if a map is presented to him upside down, he places it in a proper manner, and if one map is substituted to another, he instantly discovers the deception.

III. Printing, viz. In black characters, for the public. In relief, for themselves.

In black, they have printed no inconsiderable number of voluminous works, for the use of the public. In relief, they have printed for themselves a catechism, a grammar, and a great quantity of music. No where but at this institution, and at the Museum of the Blind, of which I shall presently speak, is there to be found an office for printing in relief.

IV. Music, viz. Vocal and instrumental, and composition.

The music of the blind pupils has always been employed with the greatest success in public festivals, playhouses, balls, coffeehouses, and many public and private assemblies. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the decided taste of the blind for music, and of the consolation which it affords them. Deprived of their eyes, they seem to become all ears.

No sooner had M. Haüy rendered public his first essays, than the learned, and especially the members of the *ci-devant* Academy of Sciences, stamped them with their approbation, as appears by a Report signed by some of the most distinguished of that body, such as Desmarets, La Rochefoucault, Condorcet, &c. Professors of the arts, cultivated by his pupils, such as printing, music, &c. were equally eager to acknowledge to what an astonishing degree the blind had succeeded in appropriating to themselves the enjoyment of those arts. Three of the first master-printers in Paris certified the intelligence and skill of the blind pupils; and a concert was executed by them to the no small satisfaction of the *ci-devant* Academy of Music.

Persons of every degree now wished to be spectators of the result of these essays. Lewis XVI sent for the Industrious Blind, their machinery, &c.

to Versailles; he visited them when at work, and inspected their several performances, attended by all the royal family, princes of the blood, ministers, ambassadors, &c. After having procured the inhabitants of that town this interesting sight for several successive days, he rewarded the blind with marks of his favour and encouragement.

The government, which succeeded to the monarchy, shewed no less interest in the progress of M. Haüy's undertaking. The different legislatures, which have successively governed France, promoted it by various decrees. In proportion as the number of the pupils increased, so did the resources of their industrious activity. By a law which was solicited by M. Haüy, and which excited and kept up a singular emulation among his pupils, the blind, in preference to the clear-sighted of equal merit, were admitted to the various secondary employments of the establishment. From that period, the first blind pupils, formed by M. Haüy, being promoted to the functions of teachers, transmitted with success to young blind children, sent for instruction, from different parts of the Republic, the first elements of education given them by himself and assistants. By virtue of this law, the office of house-steward was intrusted to Lesueur, a blind pupil who had already discharged it with credit at a banker's. It will scarcely be believed, no doubt, that a

blind man can be a cashier, receive money coming in, either from the public treasury, or from the industry of his brothers in misfortune; make of it a suitable division; buy commodities necessary for life and clothing; introduce the strictest economy into his disbursements; by means of his savings, procure the establishment the implements and machinery of the Industrious Blind; in times of real scarcity, make use of the productions of the labour of the grown blind, to maintain the young blind pupils, and that, with all these concerns on his hands, his accounts should always be ready for inspection.

M. Haüy informs me that out of fifteen or twenty of his old pupils, whom he has connected by the ties of marriage, ten or twelve are fathers; and that they have children more fortunate than the authors of their days, since the enjoy the benefit of sight. But the most interesting part of these connexions is, that the blind father (on the principle of the plan before-stated) teaches his clear-sighted son reading, arithmetic, music, and every thing that it is possible to teach without the help of the eyes.

Raised work, or relief, is the simple and general process by means of which M. Haüy forms his pupils, and there are a great number

of them whose abilities would excite the pride of many a clear-sighted person. For instance, in addition to the before-mentioned LESUEUR, who is an excellent geographer and a good mathematician, might be quoted HUARD, a man of erudition and a correct printer; likewise CAILLAT, a capital performer on the violin, and a celebrated composer. For vocal and instrumental music, printing, and handicraft work, there might be noticed thirty or forty, as well as ten or twelve for knowledge relating to the sciences.

It may not be improper to observe, that M. HAÜY always first puts a frame into the hands of his pupils, and that he has made a law, to which he scrupulously adheres, not to lean too much towards the *agreeable* arts, unless the pupil manifest for them a peculiar disposition.

Hence you may form an idea of the proficiency which these unfortunates attain under the auspices of the benevolent M. HAÜY. In the compass of a letter, or even of several letters, it is impossible to develope proceedings which it is more easy to put into execution than to describe. The process alone of printing in relief would require a vast number of pages, and some plates, in order to make it perfectly intelligible; but the greater part of what composes these branches of instruction is amply detailed in a work, which I shall communicate to you, entitled "*Essai sur l'Édu-*

cation des Aveugles, par Valentin Haüy, *auteur de la manière de les instruire,*" printed under the sanction of the *ci-devant* Academy of Sciences.

By a law on public education, passed in July 1796, several establishments were to be founded in favour of blind children, in the principal towns of the Republic; but, in consequence of the political changes which have since occurred in the government, it has never been carried into execution.

In October, 1800, the Consuls decreed that the *National Institution of the Industrious Blind* should be united to the Hospital of the *Quinze-vingts*, together with the soldiers who had lost their sight in Egypt. M. Haüy is shortly to be honoured by a pension, as a reward for the services which he has bestowed on those afflicted with blindness. At the present moment, he is engaged in founding a second establishment, of a similar nature, which is to take the name of

MUSEUM OF THE BLIND.

On my asking M. Haüy, whether he would not retire, as it was intended he should, on his pension? "This favour of the government," replied he, "I consider as a fresh obligation, "silently imposed on me, to continue to be of "service to the blind. The first establishment,

" supported and paid by the nation, belonged " to the poor. In forming the second," added he, " I have yielded to the wishes of parents in easy " circumstances, who were desirous of giving " to their blind children a liberal education."

I have already mentioned, that, agreeably to M. HAÜY's plan, the blind instruct the clear-sighted; and in this Museum, which is situated *Rue Sainte Avoie, Hôtel de Mêsme, No.* 19, the former are to be seen directing a class of fifty youths, whom they instruct in every branch before-mentioned, writing excepted. It is also in contemplation to teach a blind pupil *pasigraphy*, or universal language, invented by DEMAIMIEUX.

M. HAÜY details to strangers every part of his plan with the most patient and obliging attention. When he had concluded, I could not avoid expressing a wish that the art of instructing the blind in the fullest extent might be speedily introduced among all nations. " After " having paid to my country," rejoined M. HAÜY, " the merited homage of my invention, " my anxiety to contribute to the relief of the " afflicted, wherever they may be found, gives " birth to the desire of propagating, as much " as possible, an institution which enlightened " men and philanthropists have been pleased to " recommend to the attention of foreigners and " to the esteem of my countrymen, as may be

" seen by consulting different literary publica-
" tions from the year 1785 down to the pre-
" sent time, particularly the new French En-
" cyclopædia, at the article *Aveugle.*

" I should," added he, " perform a task very
" agreeable to my feelings in concurring, by
" my advice and knowledge, to lay in Eng-
" land the foundation of an establishment of a
" description similar to either of those which
" I have founded in Paris. One of my pu-
" pils in the art of instructing the blind, M.
" GRANCHER, a member of several learned so-
" cieties in France, and possessed of my means
" and method, would voluntarily devote his
" talents and experience to the success of such
" an undertaking, to which he is himself strong-
" ly attached through philanthropy and zeal
" for my reputation."—" I am persuaded," in-
terrupted I, " that were the advantages of such
" an establishment made public in England,
" it would receive the countenance and sup-
" port of every friend of human nature."—" It
" is an unquestionable fact," concluded M.
HAÜY, " that an institution of fifty blind, well
" conducted, ought, by their labour, to pro-
" duce more than would defray its expenses. I
" have already even tried with success to apply
" to the English tongue my method of read-
" ing, which is so contrived for the French

" language, that I need not give more than " two or three lessons to a blind child, in " order to enable him to teach himself to read, " without the further help of any master."

LETTER XLI.

Paris, December 29, 1801.

Such a crowd of different objects present themselves to my mind, whenever I sit down to write to you, that, frequently as I have visited the Grand French Opera since my arrival here, I have been hesitating whether I should make it the subject of this letter. However, as it is one of the first objects of attraction to a stranger, and the first in a theatrical point of view, I think you cannot be too soon introduced to a knowledge of its allurements. Let us then pass in review the

THÉÂTRE DES ARTS ET DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE.*

* Since the above letter was written, this Lyric theatre has changed its name for that of *Théâtre de l'Opéra*. This seems like one of the minor modifications, announcing the general retrograde current setting towards the readoption of old habits; for the denomination of *Théâtre des Arts* was certainly

Previously to the revolution, the French opera-house, under the name of *Académie Royale de Musique*, was situated on the Boulevard, near the *Porte St. Martin*. Except the façade, which has been admired, there was nothing very remarkable in the construction of this theatre, but the dispatch with which it was executed.

The old opera-house in the *Palais Royal* having been burnt down on the 8th of June 1781, M. Lenoir, the architect, built a new one in the short space of sixty days, and, within a fortnight after, it was decorated and opened. Had an hospital been reduced to ashes, observes an able writer, it would have required four years at least to determine on the eligibility of new plans.—But a theatre, constructed with such expedition, excited apprehensions respecting its stability: it was necessary to remove them, and, by way of *trying the house*, the first representation was given *gratis*. This had the desired effect: after having sustained the weight of between two and three

unobjectionable, as poetry, music, dancing, painting, and mechanics, concurred in rendering more pompous and more surprising the effects which a fertile genius, when governed by reason, might assemble here for the gratification of the public. The addition of the words *et de la République* was probably given to it from patriotic zeal, at the time when the *Royal Academy of Music* was abolished by the decree which annihilated all similar monarchical institutions.

thousand market-women, oyster-wenches, shoe-blacks, chimney-sweepers, porters, &c. it was deemed sufficiently solid to receive a more refined audience.

At the beginning of the year 1793, the interior of this quickly-built theatre was also destroyed by fire. But the opera experienced no interruption: such an event would be regarded as a public calamity in the capital. In fact, this expensive establishment affords employ to a vast number of persons. The singers, dancers, musicians, machinists, painters, tailors, dress-makers, scene-shifters, &c. attached to it, would constitute a little nation. The richness and variety of the dresses give activity to several branches of trade, and its representations involve all the agreeable arts. These united attractions captivate foreigners, and induce them to squander considerable sums of money in the country. Hence, were the opera-house shut up, commerce would suffer; there would be an absolute void in the pleasures of the Parisians; and, as experience proves, these volatile people would sooner resign every thing most valuable than any portion of their amusements. Besides, without such an establishment, the talents of singers and dancers could not be maintained in their present perfection. It holds out to them constant encouragement and remuneration; while, compared to any

other theatre, it excites in the spectators a greater number of pleasing sensations. How then could it be dispensed with?

Accordingly, when the disaster befell the theatre of the *Porte St. Martin*, it was considered as a fortunate circumstance that the present opera-house was just finished. The performers of the *ci-devant Académie de Musique* immediately established themselves in this new asylum, which is situated in the *Rue de la Loi*, facing the National Library, and opened it to the public under the name of *Théâtre des Arts*. I must observe, by the way, that, in France, all players, dancers, musicians, and every one who exercises an art, are now styled *artistes*.

The form of this house is nearly a parallelogram: one of the shorter sides is occupied by the stage, and the other three are slightly curved. In general, one is ill placed here, except in the boxes in front of the stage, and in the pit, the seats of which rise abruptly, in the manner of an amphitheatre, from the orchestra to the first tier of boxes. The Chief Consul has chosen for himself the stage-box, as I believe we term it in England, on the right hand of the actors. It is elegantly decorated with scarlet velvet, embroidered in gold. The ornaments (I am not speaking of the scenery) are neither of superlative elegance, nor do they display extraordinary taste.

The curtain, however, is majestic and beautiful, as well as the ceiling.

" Here," says a French author, " arts, graces, " genius, and taste conspire to produce a most " magnificent, a most brilliant, and most en- " chanting spectacle. Here heroes come to life " again to sing their love and their despair; here " many a goddess is seen to mix with mortals, " many a Venus to descend from the radiant " Olympus in order to throw herself into the " arms of more than one Anchises."—Certainly, if splendid decorations, rich and appropriate dresses, the most skilful machinists, the most diitinguished composers, a numerous and most select orchestra, some excellent actors, together with the most celebrated dancers in Europe, of both sexes, constitute a brilliant spectacle, this justly deserves that title. In these magnificent arrangements, we see again the Grand French Opera, as it appeared in the most splendid days of the monarchy. With the exception of the singing, every other department at this theatre is much improved; the only drawback that I can discover at the representation of the same pieces, which I have often seen here before the revolution, consists in the exterior of the spectators. Between the acts, when I transport myself in idea to the former period, and, looking round the house, form a comparison, I find the re-

publican audience far less brilliant, owing, no doubt, to the absence of that glare of diamonds, embroidery, lace, and other finery, which distinguished the frequenters of the opera under the old government.

The performances at the opera being, in general, more calculated for charming the eyes and ears, than gratifying the understanding, it is, consequently, the most frequented of any of the capital.

" ——————— With the many
" Action is eloquence, and th' eyes of th' ignorant
" More learned than their ears."

There is, however, no piece represented at this theatre that a stranger ought not to see, either on account of the music, or of the spectacle and its decorations. The operas, or lyric tragedies, which, from the number of times they have been performed, appear to have obtained the greatest success, are those of GLUCK. The originality, the energy, the force and truth of declamation of this great musician were likely to render him successful, especially among the French, who applauded the two last-mentioned qualities on their other national theatre.

With the exception of one only, all the works of GLUCK have remained as stock-pieces, and are played from time to time. They are five

in number; namely, *Iphigénie en Aulide, Iphigénie en Tauride, Orphée et Euridice, Armide,* and *Alceste.* That which could not maintain its ground, and consequently fell, was *Narcisse.* The flimsiness of the poem was the cause; for the music, I am assured, is the finest that GLUCK ever composed, and several pieces of it have been repeatedly performed in the Parisian concerts.

The *Didon* of PICCINI and the *Œdipe à Colonne* of SACCHINI have had no less success than the operas of GLUCK. They are very frequently represented.

It may not, perhaps, be unseasonable to remind you that, from twenty to twenty-five years ago, when the old operas of LULLI and RAMEAU were laid aside, and replaced by modern works, two parties were formed, which, from the name of the musician that each adopted, were called, the one, *Gluckists*; and the other, *Piccinists.* Their inveteracy was great, somewhat like that which, forty years before, existed between the *Molinists* and *Jansenists:* and few persons, if any, I believe, remained neuter. Victory seems to have crowned the former party. Indeed the music of GLUCK possesses a melody which is wonderfully energetic and striking. PICCINI is skilful and brilliant in his harmony, as well as sweet and varied in his

composition; but this style of beauty has been thought to be deficient in expression. Truth obliges me to say, that, of PICCINI's works, no opera is now played but his *Didon*, and that his other productions, which, to the best of my recollection, are *Atys*, an opera called *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and *Pénélope*, have fallen. This was ascribed to the mediocrity of the language; a part of an opera somewhat essential, though no great attention seems to be bestowed on it. But if people here are not very difficult as to the style of the language, they require at least an action well conducted and interesting. When the piece is of itself cold, it is not in the power of the finest music to give it warmth. The *Œdipe à Colonne* of SACCHINI is reckoned by many persons the *chef-d'œuvre* of operas. That able musician has there excelled in all that is graceful, noble, and pathetic; but it exhibits not the tragic fire that is to be found in the works of GLUCK. SACCHINI has left behind him another composition, called *Arvire et Evéline*, which, though a cold subject, taken from the history of England, is held in estimation.

At this theatre are also performed what the French term *opéras de genre*. These are a species of comic opera, in which is introduced a great deal of show and bustle. *Panurge*, *La Caravanne*,

Anacréon, *Tarare*, *Les Prétendus*, *Les Mystères d'Isis*, &c. are of this description. The music of the first three is by GRÉTRY. It is considered as replete with grace, charm, and truth of expression. The poem of *Panurge* is an *estravaganza*. Those of the *Caravanne* and of *Anacréon* are but indifferent. It required no small share of talent to put words into the mouth of the charming poet, whose name is given to the last-mentioned piece; but M. GUY appears not to have thought of this. *Tarare* is a tissue of improbabilities and absurdities. The poem is frequently nothing but an assemblage of words which present no meaning. It is a production of the celebrated BEAUMARCHAIS, who has contrived to introduce into it a sort of impious metaphysics, much in fashion here before the revolution. The music is by SALIERI; it is very agreeable. The decorations are brilliant and diversified. The piece is preceded by a prologue (which no other opera has) representing the confusion and separation of the elements; and at the time of its first appearance, I remember it was said that chaos was the image of the author's head.

Les Prétendus is a piece in one act, the plot of which is weak, though of a gay cast. The music is charming. It is by LE MOYNE, who died a few years ago, at an early period of

life. *Les Mystères d'Isis*, which is now the rage, is an incoherent parody from a German opera, called *the Enchanted Flute*. To say that the music is by MOZART, dispenses me from any eulogium. The decorations are extremely beautiful and varied: a scene representing paradise is really enchanting.

After speaking of lyric tragedies, I should have mentioned those which are either in rehearsal, or intended to be brought forward at this theatre. They consist of *Hécube*, *Andromaque*, *Sémiramis*, and *Tamerlan*. Although none of them are spoken of very highly, they will, in all probability, succeed in a certain degree; for a piece scarcely ever has a complete fall at the opera. This theatre has so many resources in the decorations, music, and dancing, that a new piece is seldom destitute of something worth seeing.

What, at the present day, proves the greatest attraction to the opera, is the dancing. How bad soever may be a piece, when it is interspersed with fine ballets, it is sure of having a certain run. Of these I shall say no more till I come to speak of that department.

The weakest part of the performances at the opera is the singing. All are agreed as to the mediocrity of the singers at this theatre, called

lyric. No one can say that, within the last ten or twelve years, they are improved. To any person fond of the Italian style, it would be a sort of punishment to attend while some of the singers here go through a scene. On the stage of the French comic opera, it has been adopted, and here also a similar change is required; but with the will to accomplish it, say its partisans, the means, perhaps, might still be wanting. The greater part of the old performers have lost their voice, and those who have not, do not appear to have sufficiently followed the progress of modern taste to be able all at once to embrace a new manner.

The first singer at the opera, in point of talent, is Laïs. He even leaves all the others far behind him, if we consider him only as a singer. He is a *tenore*, according to the expression of the Italians, and a *taille*, according to that of the French: in the *cantabile* or graceful style, he is perfect; but he ought to avoid tragic pieces requiring exertion, in which his voice, though flexible, is sometimes disagreeable, and even harsh. Besides, he is absolutely deficient in nobleness of manner; and his stature and countenance are better suited to low character. Indeed, he chiefly performs in the operas termed here *opéras de genre*, such as *Panurge*, *La Cara-*

vanne, Anacréon, and *Les Prétendus.* In these, his acting is correct, and his delivery judicious.

Laïs is no less famous for the violence of his political opinions than for his talents as a singer. At the period when the abettors of the reign of terror were, in their turn, hunted down, for a long time he durst not appear on the stage. He was accused by his brother performers of having said that the opera would never go on well till a guillotine should be placed on the stage. This stroke was levelled against the greater part of the actors and the musicians belonging to the orchestra. However, as Laïs could not be reproached with any culpable *actions,* he found zealous defenders, and the public sacrificed their resentment to their pleasure. This lenity appears not to have had on him the effect which one would imagine. He still possesses every requisite for singing well, but seems indifferent as to the means of pleasing, and exerts himself but little.

If singers were esteemed by seniority, and perhaps by employment, Lainez would be reckoned the first at this theatre. He is a counter-tenor, and performs the parts of a lover. His voice is very strong, and, besides singing through his nose, he screams loud enough to split one's ears. I have already observed that the ears of a taste-

ful amateur would sometimes be shocked at this theatre. The same remark, no doubt, was equally just some time ago; for J. J. ROUSSEAU, when he was told that it was intended to restore to him the free admission which he had enjoyed at the opera, replied that this was unnecessary, because he had at the door of his country-residence the screech owls of the forest of Montmorency. Those who are partial to LAINEZ think him an excellent actor. This means that he has some warmth, and bestirs himself like a demoniac. When the heroes of the opera wore hair-powder, nothing was more comic than to see him shake his head, which was instantly enveloped in a cloud of dust. At this signal the plaudits burst forth with great violence, and the would-be singer, screaming with still greater loudness, seemed on the point of bursting a blood-vessel.

It is reported that, not long since, a great personage having sent for the *artists* belonging to the opera, said to them, addressing himself to LAINEZ, " Gentlemen, do you intend to keep " long your old singers *?" The same personage then turning round to the dancers added, " As " for you, gentlemen of the dance, none but " compliments can be paid to you."

* It appears that, from pique, this old opera-singer refused to sing on Easter-Sunday last, (1802) at the cathedral of *Notre-Dame*.

Laforêt who (as the French express it), *doubles* Lainez, that is, performs the same characters in his absence, has little more to recommend him than his zeal. His voice is tolerably agreeable, but not strong enough for so large a house. As an actor he is cold and aukward.

Next comes Chéron: he is a counter-tenor. His voice is strong, and the tone of it sonorous and clear. However, it is thought to be weakened, and although this singer sometimes throws out fine tones, he is reproached with a want of taste and method. He is a sorry actor. Indeed, he very seldom makes his appearance, which some attribute to idleness; and others, to his state of health. The latter is likely to be occasionally deranged, as in point of epicurism, he has as great a reputation as our celebrated Quin.

Adrien, who *doubles* Chéron, is an excellent actor; but his means do not equal his intelligence. He presents himself wonderfully well; all his movements, all his gestures have dignity, grace, and ease. There are, for the same employment, other secondary singers, some of whom are by no means backward in exertion, particularly Dufresne; but an impartial observer can say nothing more in their commendation.

Let us now examine the qualifications of *Mesdames les cantatrices.*

The first female singer at the opera is Made-

moiselle MAILLARD. By means of a rather pretty face, a clear voice, and a cabal of malcontents (for there are some every where and in every line), she obtained loud applause, when she first appeared some years ago as the rival of the charming ST. HUBERTI. Since the revolution, France has lost this celebrated actress, and probably for ever. She emigrated, and has since married the *ci-devant* Comte d'Antraigues. Although she had not a powerful voice, she sang with the greatest perfection; and her impressive and dignified style of acting was at least equal to her singing.

At the present day, Mademoiselle MAILLARD has succeeded Madame ST. HUBERTI, and is, as I have said, the first singer, in point of rank. She is become enormous in bulk, and as the Italians express it, *canta a salti*. Her powerful voice fills the house, but she is not unfrequently out of tune: her declamation is noisy; while her masculine person gives her in all her motions the air of a Bacchante. These qualities, no doubt, recommended her to the notice of CHAUMETTE, the proclaimer of atheism, under whose auspices she more than once figured as the goddess of reason. She has, nevertheless, occasionally distinguished herself as an actress; and those who love noise, admire the effect of her transitions. But I give the preference to Mademoiselle LATOUR, who

has a melodious pipe, which you will probably hear, as it is said that she has not retired from the stage, where she frequently reminded the public of the fascinating ST. HUBERTI, particularly in the character of *Didon.*

Since the prolonged absence of Mademoiselle LATOUR, Madame BRANCHU *doubles* Mademoiselle MAILLARD. She is of much promise both as a singer and actress. Her voice is agreeable, but not extensive.

Mademoiselle ARMAND is another most promising singer, who has a more powerful organ than Madame BRANCHU, and when she has perfectly acquired the art of modulating it, will, doubtless, prove a very valuable acquisition to this theatre. Her voice has much sweetness, and sometimes conveys to the ear the most flattering sounds, as its low tones are grave without being harsh, and its high ones sonorous without being sharp. She seems to execute the most difficult pieces of music with considerable ease; but she is deficient in action.

Mademoiselle HENRY is strong as to method, but weak as to means, in singing. There are several other female singers; but, in my opinion, their merits do not entitle them to particular mention.

Twelve or fourteen years ago, the opera was much better provided with singers than it is at

the present moment. Their voices, in every line of this department, were well-toned and powerful. They easily reached the highest notes according to the tone given by the diapason. Since then, the powers of most of the singers who still remain on the stage have diminished, and those called in to supply the place of such as are dead or have retired, are not near so rich in voice as their predecessors. The diapason, however, has remained the same: to this, in a great measure, may be attributed those shrieks and efforts which disgust foreigners, unaccustomed to the French method. At the Parisian comic opera, in consequence of a remonstrance from the principal singers, their diapason has been lowered half a tone; and it seems necessary to examine whether the same rule be not applicable to this theatre.

The choruses, notwithstanding, are now given here with more effect and precision than I ever remember at any former period. In these, the ear is no longer offended by exaggerated extensions of the voice, and, on the whole, they are sung in a grand and graceful style.

The orchestra, which is ably led by Rey, has also experienced a manifest improvement. The principal musicians, I understand, have been recently changed; and the first artists are engaged for the execution of the solos, and no-

thing can now be wished for, either as to the spirit and correctness of the overtures, or to the melody and taste of the accompaniments.

The Chief Consul is said to be particularly partial to Italian music. In consequence, KREUTZER, a capital violin, and also a celebrated composer, has been dispatched to Italy by the French government, for the express purpose of selecting and purchasing the finest musical compositions which can be procured in that land of harmony. Thus, the advice given by ROUSSEAU, in his *Dictionnaire de Musique*, has at length been followed.

So much for the singing department of the opera, which, as you see, with some exceptions, is but indifferent: in my next, I shall speak of the dancing.

LETTER XLII.

Paris, December 30, 1801.

DANCING, like the other arts in France, has, during the revolution, experienced the vicissitudes of this new order of things; but also, like the other arts, it has made a progress equally astonishing and rapid. However, it must not thence be inferred that dancing, particularly theatrical, had not attained a certain degree of

superiority long before the revolution; yet a most evident improvement has been made in it, not only by the old-established dancers, who then seemed almost to have done their best, but by the numerous competitors who have since made their appearance.

It is not in the power of words to convey an adequate idea of the effect produced on the senses by some of the ballets. In lieu of those whimsical capers, forced attitudes, vague and undefined gestures of a set of dancers whose movements had no signification, dancing now forms an animated, graceful, and diversified picture, in which all the human passions are feelingly pourtrayed. Their language is the more expressive from its being more refined and concentrated. In the silence of pantomime, recourse is had to every ingenious gesture, in order to impart to them greater force and energy; and, in this mute play, restraint seems to kindle eloquence. Every motion has its meaning; the foot speaks as well as the eye, and the sensations of the mind are expressed by the attitudes of the body. A delicate sentiment is rendered with the rapidity of lightning. Love, fear, hope, and despair, change countenances, and say every thing that they wish to say, void of deceit, as if falsehood no longer existed as soon as the mouth ceased to open.

It should not be forgotten that it was Noverre who first brought about in France this reform in what were till then called ballets, without deserving the title. He banished wigs, hoop-petticoats, and other preposterous habiliments, and, by dint of superior genius, seconded by taste and perseverance, introduced those historical pictures, replete with grace, expression, and sentiment, in the room of the flat, insipid, and lifeless caricatures, which had hitherto usurped admiration.

But, though Noverre, and, after him, the Gardels, introduced on the Parisian stage the pantomimic art in all the lustre in which it flourished on the theatres of Greece and Rome, yet they had been anticipated by Hilwerding in Germany, and Angiolini in Italy, two celebrated men, who, in a distinguished manner, laid the foundations of a species of modern entertainment, before known only by the annals of ancient history. Those who have trod in their steps have infinitely surpassed them in attractions, and, by their scientific compositions, acquired a justly-merited reputation.

Gardel, who, for the last fifteen years, has been the first dancer at the opera, shews himself but seldom. After having, during that long period, received the warmest and best deserved applause, either in the execution of the noble

style of dancing, or in the composition of ballets, he seems now to have devoted himself almost exclusively to the last-mentioned branch of his art, and the perfection to which he daily carries it, may well compensate the public for the privation of his talents in the line of execution.

The most famous pantomimical ballets or *ballets d'action* (as they are styled) now represented here, are *Psyché*, *Télémaque*, *Le Jugement de Paris*, *Mirza*, and *la Dansomanie*. The impression to which I have before alluded, is particularly observable during the representation of the first three (composed by GARDEL), the charm of which would be weakened by any attempt at description. No spectator, be his disposition ever so cold and indifferent, can behold them unmoved. Every effort of human skill and invention is exerted to excite astonishment and admiration. The *ensemble* of the *spectacle* and decorations correspond to the fertile genius of the author. It is the triumph of the art, and there may be fixed the limits of pantomime, embellished by dancing. Nothing more perfect than the rapid change of scenery. Meteors, apparitions, divinities borne on clusters of clouds or in cars, appear and disappear, as if by enchantment, exhibiting situations the most picturesque and striking.

Boulay, the principal machinist, is, perhaps, the first in his line in Europe. In the opera of *Armide*, I have seen him raise into the air nearly one half of the theatre. He executes whatever is proposed to him, no matter how difficult, and he is well seconded by the painters and draughtsmen. The new decorations display much taste, and produce an effect truly wonderful.

Had I not already made the remark, you might have concluded from the general tenour of my observations, that the dancing forms the most brilliant part of the *spectacle* at this theatre, or, in other words, that the accessory prevails over the main subject. It is no longer, as heretofore, a few capital dancers of both sexes who form the ornament of the opera. Almost all the competitors in this line are so many *virtuosi* who deserve and equally participate the plaudits of the public. There is not among them any mediocrity. The establishment of the *école de la danse* is for this theatre a nursery, where Terpsichore finds, in great numbers, the most promising plants for the decoration of her temple. It is saying little to affirm that nothing equals the superiority of talents of this description which the opera comprehends at the present moment. These advantages, I understand, are chiefly due to

GARDEL. He has given the example and the precept, and, through his guidance, the art of dancing is become doubly captivating.

After having supplied most of the principal cities in Europe with capital dancers, this theatre, far from being impoverished, is still in possession of a numerous train of first-rate *artists* of both sexes in every style of dancing. The men are GARDEL, MILON, ST. AMAND, DESHAIES, GOYON, BEAUPRÉ, BRANCHU, BEAULIEU, AUMER, LÉON, TAGLIONI, DUPORT, and VESTRIS.

It is unnecessary to speak of the talents of VESTRIS, as they are as well known in London as in Paris. I shall therefore content myself with remarking that he delights in exhibiting feats of agility; but as his age increases, connoisseurs think that he declines a little. Nevertheless, he is still, in reality, the first dancer at the opera. It is said that his son, ARMAND VESTRIS, will, in time, be able to supply his place; in the mean while, DUPORT bids fair to fill it, in case the "*Dieu de la danse*" should retire; not to mention DESHAIES, who has lately met with an accident which has disabled him for the present; but who, when on the stage in the presence of Vestris, has shewn that he could also astonish and delight the spectators. Without having the boldness of his rival, he exhibits more certainty and *à-plomb*. In the character of *Télémaque*, he appears with

all the grace of Apollo. If excellence in dancing be allowed to consist less in the efforts of the dancer, than in the ease and gracefulness of his attitudes, and the lightness and precision of his steps, DESHAIES may be classed in the first rank of his profession.

In this exercise, as in every thing else, there is a just medium, and this is more particularly observed by the principal female dancers. The names of these are GARDEL, CLOTILDE, CHEVIGNY, PÉRIGNON, COLLOMB, CHAMEROI *, SAULNIER, VESTRIS, DELISLE, MILLIÈRE, LOUISE, FÉLICITÉ, DUPORT, TAGLIONI, ALINE, ÉTIENNE, JACOTOT, FLORINE, ADÈLE, to whom may be

* The refusal made by the Rector of St. Roch to admit into that church the corpse of Mademoiselle CHAMEROI, has informed us in England of the loss which this theatre has sustained in that young and accomplished dancer. She died, generally regretted, in consequence of being delivered of a child of which VESTRIS considered himself as the real father. However, M. DE MARKOFF, the Russian ambassador at Paris, stood sponsor to the infant, and, according to the scandalous chronicle, was not contented with being only a spiritual father. The Parisian public have consoled themselves for this loss by talking a great deal about the scene to which it gave rise. It seems that the Rector was decidedly in the wrong, the dancers of the opera never having been comprised in the papal excommunication which involved players. The persons composing the funeral procession were also in the wrong to go to St. Roch, since the Rector had positively declared that the corpse of Mademoiselle CHAMEROI should not enter the church.

added two most promising *débutantes*, La Neuville and Bigotini, whose first appearance I witnessed.

Though Madame Gardel, wife of the principal ballet-master, shines in *demi-caractère*, her talents, in the different parts in which she is placed, are above all panegyric. As Noverre has said somewhere of a famous dancer, "she is "always tender, always graceful, sometimes a "butterfly, sometimes a zephyr, at one mo- "ment inconstant, at another faithful; always "animated by a new sentiment, she represents "with voluptuousness all the shades of love." To sum up her merits, she is really in her art the female Proteus of the lyric scene. Mademoiselle Clotilde is a tall, elegant woman, who dances in the serious style. All her movements, made with precision, exhibit the beautiful proportion of her finely-modelled figure; but, owing to her stature, she appears to most advantage in pantomime, particularly in the character of *Calypso* in the ballet of *Télémaque*. In the same ballet, Millière, in the part o *Eucharis*, displays her playful graces and engaging mien. Chevigny is full of expression in pantomime, and dances in great perfection, notwithstanding her *embonpoint*. Pérignon and Collomb are superior in the comic style, and

all the others are not without some peculiar exellence*.

I should never finish, were I to attempt to particularize the merits of all these fascinating women, who, as well as the men, have, of late, alternately interchanged the characters they performed in the ballets of action. Even those introduced occasionally in the fêtes given and received by the heroes in the different operas, present a real contest, in which the first-rate dancers of both sexes exert themselves to snatch the palm from their rivals. When a theatre possesses such a richness, variety, and assemblage of talents in the same art, it may boldly style itself the first in Europe. But I must confess that an innovation has been introduced here which detracts much from what has

* In a preceding note, VESTRIS has been mentioned as the reputed lover of Mademoiselle CHAMEROI, and from this instance of illicit intercourse, it might, perhaps, be erroneously inferred that most of the Parisian female opera-dancers had overleaped the pale of virtue. Without pretending to enter the lists as the champion of their character, though I admire their talents as warmly as any amateur, truth induces me to observe that many of these ladies enjoy an unblemished reputation. Madame VESTRIS, in particular, is universally represented as a young and pretty woman, much attached to her faithless husband, and, notwithstanding his improper example, a constant observer of the most exemplary conduct.

always been considered as fine dancing. I mean the mania of *pirouettes*. This, however, seems less to be attributed to a decided *penchant* of the dancers than to that of a new public, not yet familiarized to what constitutes true taste.

During a revolution, every thing changes, every thing assumes a new face. What was entitled to please yesterday in times of tranquillity, is to-day, during the jar of public opinion, and will be to-morrow subject to all the variations of caprice. The marvellous and gigantic usurp the place of the natural, and claim alone the right to entertain. True it is that the dancers have found means to render this new manner interesting, while they have enjoyed the sweets of it. The pleasure of being applauded is so great, that it is no easy matter to withstand the powerful allurement of the plaudits of a numerous audience. Boileau has said, "*Aimez-vous la muscade? On en a mis* "*par tout.*" The French dancers, following his example, have said, "*Aimez-vous les pirouettes?*" The public have answered *oui*; and *pirouettes* are all the rage.

When a certain king of Bisnagar sneezes, the court, the town, the provinces, all the subjects of his empire, in short, sneeze in imitation of their monarch. Without departing from

my subject, I shall only observe that *pirouettes*, like this sneezing, have found their way from the opera-stage into the circles of every class of society in Paris. There lies the absurdity. The young Frenchmen have been emulous to dance like dancers by profession; the women have had the same ambition; and both men and women have, above all, been desirous to shine like them in *pirouettes*. Thence most of the dances, formerly practised in society, in which simple and natural grace was combined with a certain facility and nobleness of execution, have been entirely laid aside. It must be acknowledged, that, among the dancers in private company, there are many, indeed, who, by dint of imitation and study, have attained a great degree of perfection. But I now perceive that people here no longer dance for their amusement; they dance to gratify their vanity, and many a person who has not practised some hours in the morning under the tuition of his master, excuses himself in the evening, pretends to be lame, and declines dancing.

The taste and elegance of the dresses of the opera-dancers, like those of the heroes and heroines of the sock and buskin, leave nothing to be wished for. In lieu of drawers, which

all women, without exception, were formerly obliged to wear on the stage*, those who dance have now substituted silk pantaloons, woven with feet, in order to serve also as stockings. In some particular characters, they wear these of flesh colour, and it is not then easy, at first sight, to distinguish whether it be or be not the clothing of nature.

The French opera having been long considered as the grand national theatre, it has ever been the pride of the government, whether monarchical or republican, to support it in a manner worthy of the nation. In fact, the disbursements are so great, that it would be impossible for the receipts to cover them, though the performances are seldom suspended for more than two days in the week, and the house is generally crowded. This theatre is managed by the government, and on its account. The Minister of the Interior appoints a commissioner to superintend its operations, and managers to

* Many years ago, a Parisian actress, coming on the stage in the part of *Mérope*, in the tragedy of that name, her petticoats somehow happened to catch in the side-scene, and, in her hasty endeavours to disentangle them, she exhibited to the audience the hind part of her person. In consequence of this accident, a *sentence de police* enjoined every woman, whether actress or dancer, not to appear on the boards of any theatre without drawers.

conduct them. During the old *régime*, the opera cost the crown annually from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand livres. What the extraordinary expenses of this house are, under the present government, is not so easily ascertained; but, from the best information that I have been able to procure, their amount is from three to four hundred thousand francs a year. Here is a considerable increase; but it must be remembered that the price of several articles is now greatly augmented, if not doubled.

The receipt of the opera, on an average, used to be from twelve to fifteen thousand livres a night; what it is at this day, is not positively known. Formerly, the produce of the boxes, let by the year, was such, that nine thousand livres were paid, in a manner, before the doors were thrown open. That resource is almost void at present; nevertheless, this house being more spacious than the old one, the prices of admission higher, and the performance, perhaps, more constantly attended, the money taken at the door cannot well be less than it was formerly. It then cost much less than it does now to bring out a new piece. Thirty or forty thousand livres were sufficient for the production of the most magnificent opera; while the disbursements to be made for *Tamerlan* will, it is thought, amount to upwards of eighty thou-

sand francs. At this rate, the first representation of the *Mystères d'Isis*, of which so much has been said, must have been attended with an expense of more than a hundred thousand. Scandal whispers, that the managers of the opera are rather partial to expensive pieces; but as they are accountable for their conduct to the Minister of the Interior, I should presume that they must act as honourable men.

The salaries are not considerable at this theatre. The first performers have not more than twelve thousand francs a year, exclusively of the *feux*, which is the sum given to each of them, when they perform. This, I understand, does not exceed a louis a night. Those who have a name, indemnify themselves by going, from time to time, to play in the great commercial towns of the departments, such as Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, &c. where they generally collect a rich harvest. It is said that VESTRIS has received from the government a gratification to prevent him from visiting the British metropolis; and it is also reported that DIDELOT and LABORIE have made vain efforts to return to the Parisian opera; but that the managers, faithful to their instructions, refuse to readmit such of the old performers as have voluntarily quitted it. What attaches performers to the opera-house is the *pension de retraite*.

They all eventually obtain it, even the chorus-singers.

The remuneration of authors, that is, of the poet and composer of the music, is to each three hundred francs for every representation, when the piece is not less than three acts. This is the most common division. I know of no operas in one act; those in two are paid in the above proportion*.

* GARDEL has lately added another sprig of laurel to his brow, by the production of a new pantomimical ballet, called *Daphnis et Pandrose, ou la vengeance de l'amour*. He has borrowed the subject from a story of Madame DE GENLIS, who took it from fable. Every resource of his inexhaustible genius has been employed to give the happiest effect to this charming work, to enumerate the beauties of which is, by general report, beyond the powers of language. All the first-rate dancers of both sexes are placed in the most advantageous point of view throughout this ballet. Madame GARDEL performs in it the part of Cupid, with all the charms, wiles, and graces which poets ascribe to the roguish deity. The other characters are represented in a manner no less interesting. In short, music, dancing, pantomime, dress, decoration, every thing in this piece concurs to stamp it as one of the most wonderful productions of the kind ever exhibited to the admiration of the public.

LETTER XLIII.

Paris, January 1, 1802.

FAST locked in the arms of Morpheus, and not dreaming of what was to happen, as Lord North said, when the king caused him to be awakened, in the dead of the night, to deliver up the seals, so was I roused this morning by a message from an amiable French lady of my acquaintance, requesting me to send her some *bonbons*. "*Bonbons!*" exclaimed I, "in the name "of wonder, Rosalie, is your mistress so child- "ishly impatient as to send you trailing through "the snow, on purpose to remind me that I "promised to replenish her *bonbonnière?*"—— "Not exactly so, Monsieur," replied the *femme de chambre*, "Madame was willing to be the "first to wish you a happy new year."—"A "new year!" said I, "by the republican calen- "dar, I thought that the new year began on "the 1st of Vendémiaire."—"Very true," an- swered she; "but, in spite of new laws, people ad- "here to old customs; wherefore we celebrate "the first of January."—"As to celebrating "the first of January, *à la bonne heure*, Ro- "salie," rejoined I, "I have no sort of ob- "jection; but I wish you had adhered to some "of your other old customs, and, above all, to

" your old hours. I was not in bed till past " six o'clock this morning, and now, you wake " me at eight with your congratulations."— " Never mind, Monsieur," said she, " you will " soon drop asleep again; but my mistress hopes " that you will not fail to make one of her " party on the *Fête des Rois.*"—" Good hea- " ven!" exclaimed I again, " what, is a counter- " revolution at hand, that the *Fête des Rois* " must also be celebrated?"—" 'Tis," interrupted Rosalie, " only for the pleasure of drawing for " king and queen."—" Tell Madame," added I, " that I will accept her invitation."—Dismissing the *soubrette* with this assurance, at the same time not forgetting to present her with a new year's gift, she at once revealed the secret of her early visit, by hinting to me that, among intimate friends, it was customary to give *étrennes.* This, in plain English, implies nothing more nor less than that I must likewise make her mistress a present, on the principle, I suppose, that *les petits cadeaux entretiennent l'amitié.*

My reflection then turned on the instability of this people. After establishing a new division of time, they return to the old one, and celebrate, as formerly, the first of January. Now, it is evident that the former accords better with the order of nature, and that autumn was the first season which followed the creation. Why else should

apples of irresistible ripeness and beauty have presented themselves to the eye of our first parents in the garden of Eden? This would not have been the case, had the world commenced in winter.

Besides, a multitude of advantages would accrue to the French from an adherence to the 1st of Vendémiaire, or 23d of September of the Gregorian calendar, as the first day of the year. The weather, after the autumnal equinox, is generally settled, in consequence of the air having been purified by the pre-existing gales, the ordinary forerunners of that period: and the Parisians would not be obliged to brave the rain, the wind, the cold, the frost, the snow, &c. in going to wish a happy new year to their fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relations. For to all this are they now exposed, unless they choose to ruin themselves in coach-hire. The consequence is that they are wet, cold, and dirty for two or three successive days, and are sure to suffer by a sore throat, rheumatism, or fever, all which entail the expensive attendance of the faculty; whereas, did they celebrate the 23d of September as new year's day, they might, in a quiet, unassuming manner, pay all their visits on foot, and, in that season, this exercise would neither be prejudicial to their purse nor their health.

I do not immediately recollect whether I have

spoken to you of the long-expected account of the French expedition to Egypt, by DENON: yet I ought not to have omitted to inform you that, upwards of two months ago, I set down your name for a copy of this splendid work. It will cost you 360 francs; but you will have one of the proof impressions. I have seen a specimen of the letter-press, which is to consist of a *folio* volume, printed by Didot. The plates, amounting to upwards of one hundred and forty in number, are entirely engraved from DENON's original drawings, without any reduction or enlargement, with the exception of that representing the Battle of the Pyramids, the size of which has been increased at the express desire of BONAPARTE. I have often amused myself on a morning in contemplating these drawings; but the crowd of curious persons being generally great, I determined to seize the opportunity of examining them more at leisure to-day, when the French are entirely engaged in interchanging the compliments of the season. I found DENON himself diligently employed on some of the engravings; and so anxious is he for the publication of the work, that he toils early and late to forward its appearance.

Notwithstanding the anxiety he feels on that account, this estimable artist takes a real pleasure in explaining the subject of his drawings;

and, by means of his obliging communications, I am now become tolerably well acquainted with Egypt. What country, in fact, has a better claim to fix attention than that which served as a cradle to human knowledge, and the history of which goes back to the first ages of the world; a country, where every thing seems to have commenced? Laws, arts, sciences, and even fables, which derive their origin from nature, whose attributes they immortalize, and which, at a subsequent period, formed the ground-work of the ingenious fictions of mythology.

What idea must we not conceive of the industry and civilization of a people who erected those celebrated monuments, anterior to the annals of history, to the accounts even of tradition, those pyramids which have unalterably withstood all the ravages of time?

When we look back on the ancients, the Greeks and Romans almost exclusively divide our attention. The former, it is true, carried farther the love and the culture of the fine arts; while the latter are more remarkable for the great traits of their character; though both acquired that renown which mankind have so improperly attached to the success of arms.

But, in allowing to Greece all the interest which she claims, in so many respects, we cannot forget that she was originally peopled by Egyp-

tian colonies; that it was Egyptians who, in later times, carried thither the knowledge of the arts, the most necessary and the most indispensable to society; and that, at the epoch which preceded the splendid days of Greece, it was also into Egypt that the sages went to acquire that knowledge of a superior kind, which constituted their glory, and rendered their country illustrious.

What keeps up a sort of rivalship between Greece and Egypt is that, independently of the priority of knowledge, the former had the eminent advantage of opening her arms to philosophy and the sciences, which, forsaking their adoptive country, and not being able to survive the loss of liberty, fled back to their natal soil, and found, in the Museum of Alexandria, an asylum, which neither the Lyceum, the Portico, nor the Academy, could longer afford them at Athens. Thus, to the reign of the Ptolemies are we, unquestionably, indebted for the preservation of the knowledge acquired by the ancients.

Apropos, I forgot to mention to you that BERTHOLET, a Senator and Member of the Institute, communicated to that society, in one of its sittings last month, a letter from FOURIER, the geometrician, and member of the late Institute of Egypt. This *savant*, in the researches he made in Upper Egypt, discovered

and delineated several zodiacs, which, he says, fully confirm the theory of DUPUIS, respecting the origin and antiquity of the figures of the zodiac. As far back as the year 1781, DUPUIS published a memoir, since reprinted in his large work, entitled *De l'Origine des Cultes*, in which he presumes that the zodiac, such as it has been transmitted to us by the Greeks, is of Egyptian origin, and that it goes back to fifteen thousand years, at least, before the era of the French revolution.

LETTER XLIV.

Paris, January 3, 1802.

AN almost uninterrupted succession of wet weather has, of late, precluded me from the regular enjoyment of a morning walk. But, with the new year, we had a heavy fall of snow, which has since been succeeded by a severe frost. I gladly availed myself of this opportunity of taking exercise, and yesterday, after viewing the skaiters in that part of the *Champs Elysées* which had been inundated, and is now frozen, I immediately proceeded to the

HÔTEL DES INVALIDES.

This majestic edifice was projected by Henry IV, and executed, by order of Lewis XIV, after the designs of Bruant, who laid the foundation on the 30th of November, 1671. It is composed of five courts, surrounded by buildings. The middle court is as large as all the other four.

A spacious esplanade planted with trees, an outer court surrounded by a wall newly-built, form the view towards the river, and lead to the principal façade, which is twelve hundred feet in extent. This façade has, within these few years, been entirely polished anew: the details of sculpture have, perhaps, gained by the operation; but the architecture has certainly lost that gloomy tint which gave to this building a manly and respectable character. In the middle of this façade, in the arched part above the great gate, was a bas-relief of Lewis XIV on horseback.

This gate leads to the great court, which is decorated by two rows of arcades, the one above the other, forming, on the two stories, uniform galleries which give light to the apartments of the circumference. The windows, which serve to light the upper apartments of the façade, are remarkable from their being placed in cuirasses, as those of the great court are in trophies of arms.

From this court, you enter the church, now called the *Temple of Mars*. It is ornamented with the Corinthian order, and has the form of a Greek cross. The pulpit no longer exists. The altar, which was magnificently decorated, is likewise destroyed.

The chapels, to the number of six, were each ornamented by a cupola painted in fresco, and statues in marble by the greatest masters, which, after being left for some time exposed to the injuries of the air in the court looking towards the country, are at length deposited in the Museum of French Monuments.

To the arches of this temple are suspended the standards and colours taken from the enemy. Two British flags only contribute to augment the number. The oldest of these trophies have been removed from *Notre-Dame*. When they were formerly displayed in that cathedral, a general, who was constantly victorious, was called by the people the *upholsterer of Notre-Dame*; an energetic appellation which spoke home to the feelings. But, however calculated these emblems of victory may be to foster heroism in the mind of youth, and rekindle valour in the heart of old age, what a subject of reflection do they not afford to the philanthropist! How can he, in fact, contemplate these different flags, without regretting the torrents of

blood which they have cost his fellow-creatures?

In this *Temple of Mars* is erected the monument of TURENNE, whose body, after various removals, was conveyed hither, in great pomp, on the 1st of Vendémiaire, year IX (23d of September, 1800) conformably to a decree of the Consuls, and immediately deposited in the inside of this tomb.

The present government of France seems to have taken the hint from St. Foix, who expresses his astonishment that Lewis XIV never conceived the idea of erecting, in the *Hôtel des Invalides*, mausolea, with the statues of the generals who had led with the greatest glory the armies of the nation. "Where could "they be more honourably interred," says he, "than amidst those old soldiers, the companions of their fatigues, who, like themselves, had lavished their blood for their country*?"

At the age of sixty-four, TURENNE was killed by a cannon-ball, while reconnoitring the enemy's batteries near the village of Salzbach in Germany, on the 27th of July, 1675. No less esteemed for his virtues as a man, than honoured for his talents as a general, he at last fell a victim to his courage. His soldiers

* *Essais historiques sur Paris.*

looked up to him as to a father, and in his life-time always gave him that title. After his death, when they saw the embarrassment in which it left the generals who succeeded him in the command of the army: " *Let loose old* " *Piebald*," said they, " *he will guide us**." The same ball which (to borrow a line from Pope) laid

" The *god-like* TURENNE prostrate in the dust,"

likewise took off the arm of ST. HILAIRE, Lieutenant-general of artillery: his son, who was beside him at the moment, uttered a cry of grief. " *'Tis not me, my son, that you must be-* " *wail*," said ST. HILAIRE; " *'tis that great man.*"

The Marshal was as much lamented by the enemy as he was by his own countrymen; and MONTECUCULLI, the general opposed to him, when he learned the loss which France had sustained in the person of TURENNE, exclaimed: " Then a man is dead who was an honour " to human nature!"

The Germans, for several years, left untilled the field where he was killed, and the inhabitants shewed it as a sacred spot. They respected the old tree under which he reposed a little time before his death, and would not suffer it to be cut down. The tree perished

* This was the name given by the soldiers to the Marshal's favourite charger.

only because soldiers of all nations carried away pieces of it out of respect to his memory.

Turenne had been interred in the abbey of St. Denis, and at the time of the royal vaults being opened in 1793, by order of the National Convention, the remains of that great captain were respected amid the general destruction which ensued. From the eagerness of the workmen to behold them, his tomb was the very first that was opened. When the lid of the coffin was removed, the Marshal was found in such a state of preservation that he was not at all disfigured: the features of his face, far from being changed, were perfectly conformable to the portraits and medallions of Turenne in our possession.

This monument, now placed in the *Temple of Mars*, had been erected to that warrior in the abbey of St. Denis, and was preserved through the care of M. Lenoir; after being seen for five years in the Museum of French Monuments, of which he is the director, it was removed hither by the before-mentioned decree of the Consuls. Le Brun furnished the designs from which it was executed. The group, composed of Turenne in the arms of Immortality, is by Tuby; the accessory figures, the one representing Wisdom, and the other, Valour, are by Marsy. The bas-relief in bronze in the

middle of the cenotaph is likewise by TUBY, and represents TURENNE charging the enemy at the battle of Turckheim, in 1675.

The dome forms a second church behind the large one, to which it communicates. Its exterior, entirely covered with lead, is surrounded by forty pillars of the Composite order, and ornamented with twelve large gilt coats of mail, crowned with helmets, which serve as skylights, and with a small lantern with pillars which support a pyramid, surmounted by a large ball and a cross.

All the architecture of the dome, which is called the new church, is from the design of MANSARD. Its elevation, from the ground-floor, is three hundred feet; and its diameter, fifty. It has the character of elegance. The beauty of its proportion, its decoration, and especially all the parts which concur in forming the pyramid, render it a master-piece of architecture. But nothing commands admiration like the interior, though it may be said to be three-fourths damaged. The twelve windows, by which it is lighted, but which the observer below cannot perceive, are ornamented with coupled pilasters, resting on a continued pedestal. On the broad band, which was formerly adorned with flower-de-luces, and at this day with emblems of liberty, were the medallions of twelve of the most famous kings of France;

namely, Clovis, Dagobert, Childebert, Charlemagne, Lewis the Debonair, Charles the Bald, Philip Augustus, St. Lewis, Lewis XII, Henry IV, Lewis XIII, and Lewis XIV. The first arch, distributed into twelve equal parts, presented the twelve apostles, painted in fresco by JOUVENET. The second arch, painted by LA FOSSE, represented the apotheosis of St. Lewis, offering to God his sword and crown. The pavement, which alone has not suffered, is in compartments of different marbles of great value.

The portal, which looks towards the country, is thirty toises in extent. Of all the figures which decorated this façade, those of the Four Virtues; namely, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, and Prudence, are the only ones that have been suffered to remain in their places. They are by COYZEVOX.

The other objects most worthy of notice in this spacious building, which, together with its precincts, occupies seventeen *arpens*, are the refectories and kitchens, which are very extensive. Formerly, neither of these were kept in such high order as they are at present. The tables of the private soldiers are now better supplied; sirloins of beef and legs of mutton being no longer roasted for the officers only. In the four refectories, where the soldiers dine, twelve in a mess, they are regularly served with soup, bouilli, a

plate of vegetables, and a pint of unadulterated wine. When Peter the Great visited this establishment, the Invalids happened to be at dinner, the czar, on entering the first refectory, poured out a bumper of wine, and drank it off in a military style to the health of the veterans, whom he termed his comrades.

The halls are ornamented with paintings representing the conquests of Lewis XIV. During the reign of terror the features of the *Grand Monarque*, who made a conspicuous figure in these pictures, were concealed by a coat of dark paint, which answered the purpose of a mask. BONAPARTE has ordered this mask to be removed, so that the ambitious monarch now reappears in all his former glory.

Whatever may be said in praise of establishments of this description, for my part, I see nothing in them but the gratification of national pride. The old soldiers, are, in a manner, without a comrade, though living in the midst of their brother warriors. The good fellowship which they have witnessed in camps no longer subsists. The danger of battles, the weight of fatigues, and the participation of privations and hardships, no longer form the tie of common interest, by which they were once united. This being dissolved, they seek in vain that reciprocity of little kindnesses which they used to find in their own re-

giments and armies. All hope of promotion or change being at an end, their only consolation is to enjoy the present by indulging in reveries concerning the past.

Instead of being doomed to end their days in this sort of stately confinement, subject to restrictions which render life so dull and monotonous, how different would these veterans feel, could they retire to the bosom of their families and friends! Then, indeed, would they dwell with delight on the battles and sieges in which they had served, enumerating their many hair-breadth escapes, and detailing the particulars of the fight in which they lost their deficient leg or arm. After a pause, the sense of their country's gratitude operating powerfully on their mind, would soothe every painful recollection. Their auditors, impressed with admiration, would listen in silence to the recital of the well-fought day, and, roused by the call of national honour, cheerfully step forth to emulate these mutilated heroes, provided they were sure of a *free* asylum, when reduced to their helpless condition.

Whether I enter the *Hôtel des Invalides*, or *Chelsea Hospital*, such are the reflections which never fail to occur to me, when I visit either of those establishments, and contemplate the dejected countenances of the maimed beings that inhabit them.

Experience tells us that men dislike enjoyments, regularly prepared for them, if under restraint, and prefer smaller gratifications, of which they can partake without control. Policy, as well as prudence, therefore dictates a departure from the present system of providing for those maimed in fighting the battles of their nation.

In a word, I am fully persuaded that the sums expended in the purchase of the ground and construction of this magnificent edifice, together with the charges of maintaining the establishment, would have formed a fund that might have enabled the government to allow every wounded soldier a competent pension for life, in proportion to the length of his services, and the injuries which he might have suffered in defence of his country.

From the *Hôtel des Invalides* are avenues, planted with trees, which, on one side, communicate to the *New Boulevards*, and, on the other, to the

CHAMP DE MARS.

This extensive inclosure was originally intended for the exercises of the *École Militaire*, in front of which it is situated, as you will perceive by referring to the Plan of Paris. Its form is a parallelogram of four hundred and fifty toises in length by one hundred and fifty in breadth. It is surrounded by ditches, faced with masonry,

which are bordered on each side by a double row of trees, extending from the façade of the *ci-devant Ecole Militaire* to the banks of the Seine. That building, I shall observe *en passant*, was founded in 1751, by Lewis XV, for the military education of five hundred young gentlemen, destitute of fortune, whose fathers had died in the service. It stands on the south side of the *Champ de Mars*, and serves at present as barracks for the horse-grenadiers of the consular guard. On the third story of one of the wings is a national observatory, which was constructed at the instigation of Lalande, the celebrated astronomer.

The various scenes of which the *Champ de Mars* has successively been the theatre, are too interesting to be passed over in silence. Indeed, they exhibit the character of the nation in such striking colours, that to omit them, would be like omitting some of the principal features in the drawing of a portrait. Often have they been mentioned, it is true; but subsequent events have so weakened the remembrance of them, that they now present themselves to the mind more like dreams than realities. However, I shall touch on the most remarkable only.

In 1790, a spacious arena, encompassed by a mound of earth, divided into seats so as to accommodate three hundred thousand spectators, was formed within this inclosure. To complete

it speedily for the ceremony of the first federation, required immense labour. The slow progress of twenty-five thousand hired workmen could not keep pace with the ardent wishes of the friends of liberty. But those were the days of enthusiasm: concord and harmony then subsisted among the great majority of the French people. What other sentiments, in fact, could daily bring together, in the *Champ de Mars*, two hundred and fifty thousand persons of every class, without distinction of age or sex, to work at the necessary excavation? Thus, at the end of a week, the amphitheatre was completed as if by enchantment.

Never, perhaps, since the time of the Spartans, was seen among any people such an example of cordial union. It would be difficult for the warmest imagination to conceive a picture so varied, so original, so animated. Every corporation, every society was ambitious of the honour of assisting in the erection of the altar of the country: all wished to contribute, by individual labour, to the arrangement of the place where they were to swear to defend the constitution. Not a man, woman, or child remained an idle spectator. On this occasion, the aged seemed to have recovered the vigour of youth, and women and children to have acquired the strength of manhood. In a word, men of all trades and pro-

fessions were confounded, and cheerfully handled the pickaxe and shovel: delicate females, sprucely dressed, were seen here and there wheeling along barrows filled with earth; while long strings of stout fellows dragged heavy loads in carts and waggons. As the electric matter runs along the several links of an extensive chain, so patriotism seemed to have electrified this whole mass of people. The shock was universal, and every heart vibrated in unison.

The general good order which prevailed among this vast assemblage, composed indiscriminately of persons of every rank and condition, was truly surprising. No sort of improper discourse, no dispute of any kind occurred. But what is still more singular and more worthy of remark is, that the mutual confidence shewn by so many people, strangers to each other, was in no one instance abused. Those who threw off their coats and waistcoats, leaving them to the fate of chance, during the time they were at work elsewhere, on their return to the same spot found them untouched. Hence, as Paris is known to abound with *filoux*, it may be inferred that the *amor patriæ* had deadened in them the impulse of their ordinary vocation.

Franklin, when promoting the emancipation of America, during his residence in Paris, probably did not foresee that the French would

soon borrow his favourite expression, and that it would become the burden of a popular air. Yet so it happened; and even Lewis XVI himself participated in the patriotic labours of the *Champ de Mars*, while different bands of military music made the whole inclosure resound with *ça ira*.

To these exhilarating scenes succeeded others of the most opposite nature. Hither the guillotine was transported for the execution of the greatest astronomer of the age, and this with no other view than to prolong his punishment. Bailly, as every one knows, was the first mayor of Paris after the revolution. Launched into the vortex of politics, he became involved in the proscriptions which ensued during the reign of terror, and was dragged from prison to the *Champ de Mars*, where, though exposed to the most trying insults, he died, like a philosopher, with Socratic calmness.

In no one of the numerous victims of the revolution was the instability of popular favour more fully exemplified than in Bailly. In this *Champ de Mars*, where he had published martial law in consequence of a decree of the Convention, in the very place where he had been directed by the representatives of the people to repel the factions, he expired under the guillotine, loaded with the execration of that

same people of whom he had been the most venerated idol.

Since those sanguinary times, the *Champ de Mars* has chiefly been the site chosen for the celebration of national fêtes, which, within these few years, have assumed a character more distinguished than any ever seen under the old *régime*. These modern Olympics consist of chariot-races and wrestling, horse and foot races, ascensions of balloons, carrying three or four persons, descents from them by means of a parachute, mock-fights and aquatic tilting. After the sports of the day, come splendid illuminations, grand fire-works, pantomimes represented by two or three hundred performers, and concerts, which, aided by splendid decorations, are not deficient in point of effect: the evening concludes with dancing.

During the existence of the directorial government, the number of national fêtes had been considerably increased by the celebration of party triumphs. They are at present reduced to the two great epochs of the revolution, the taking of the Bastille on the 14th of July, 1789, and the foundation of the Republic on the 23d of September, 1792. On the anniversary of those days, the variety of the exhibitions always attracted an immense concourse. The whole of this mound, whose greatest di-

ameter is upwards of eight hundred yards, was then covered with spectators; but were the *Champ de Mars* now used on such occasions, they would be compelled to stand, there being no longer any seats for their accommodation.

The subject of national fêtes has, in this country, employed many pens, and excited much discussion. Some say that they might be rendered more interesting from the general arrangement; while others affirm that they might be made to harmonize more with the affections and habits of the people. In truth, this modern imitation of the Greek festivals has fallen far short of those animating, mirth-inspiring scenes, so ably described by the learned author of Anacharsis, where, to use his own words, "every "heart, eagerly bent on pleasure, endeavoured "to expand itself in a thousand different ways, "and communicated to others the impression "which rendered it happy." Whatever exertions have hitherto been made to augment the splendour of these days of festivity, it seems not to admit of a doubt that they are still susceptible of great improvement. If the French have not the wine of *Naxos*, their goblets may at least sparkle with *vin de Surenne*; the *Champs Elysées* may supply the place of the shady bowers of *Delos*; and, in lieu of the name of the ill-fated

NICIAS, the first promoter of the sports formerly celebrated in that once-happy island, the air may be made to ring with the name of the more fortunate BONAPARTE.

LETTER XLV.

Paris, January 6, 1802.

IN speaking of the interior of the *Louvre,* in one of my former letters, I think I mentioned the various learned and scientific societies, which, under the name of Academies, formerly held their sittings in that palace. For the sake of facilitating a comparison between the past and the present, it may be necessary to state the professed object of those different institutions.

French Academy. The preservation of the purity of the French language, its embellishment and augmentation.

Academy of Sciences. The progress of the sciences, the encouragement of researches and discoveries, as well in physics, geometry, and astronomy, as in those sciences which are applicable to the daily wants of society.

Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres.

The composition of inscriptions, of the subjects of medals, and their mottos; the research of the manners, habits, customs, and monuments of antiquity, as well as all literature relating to history.

Academy of Painting and Sculpture.

Academy of Architecture.

The titles of these are a sufficient explanation.

All these academies were founded by Lewis XIV, at the instigation of his minister Colbert; with the exception of the French Academy, which owed its origin to Cardinal Richelieu. This was a misfortune for that society; for custom had established it as a law that every new member, on the day of his reception, should not only pronounce a panegyric on him whom he succeeded, but also on the founder of the institution. It certainly was not very philosophical for men of enlightened understanding, and possessing even a common portion of sensibility, to make an eulogium on a minister so cruel, a man of a spirit so diabolically vindictive, that he even punished the innocent to revenge himself on the guilty. De Thou, the celebrated author of the *History of his own time*, had told some truths not very favourable to the memory of the Cardinal's great uncle. In consequence, the implacable minister, under false pretences, caused the philosophic historian's eldest son to be condemned and decapitated, say-

ing: " De Thou, the father, has put my name " into his history, I will put the son into mine."

It is well known, from their memoirs, that these academies included among their members men of eminent talents. The Academy of Sciences, in particular, could boast of several first-rate geniuses in the different branches which they respectively cultivated, and the unremitting labours of some of them have, no doubt, greatly contributed to enlarge the sphere of human knowledge. During the early part of the revolution, all these monarchical institutions were overthrown, and on their ruins rose the

NATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.*

This establishment was formed, agreeably to a decree of the National Assembly passed on the 3d of Brumaire, year IV (25th of October, 1796). By that decree, it appears that the Institute belongs to the whole Republic, though its point of union is fixed in Paris. Its object is to extend the limits of the arts and sciences in general, by an uninterrupted series of researches, by the publication of discoveries, by a correspondence with

* At the end of this volume will be found the new organization of the Institute, conformably to a decree of the government, dated the 3d of Pluviôse, year XI.

the learned societies of foreign countries, and by such scientific and literary labours as tend to general utility and the glory of the Republic.

It is composed of one hundred and forty-four members, resident in Paris, and of an equal number scattered over the departments. The number of its foreign associates is twenty-four. It is divided into three classes, and each class into several sections, namely:

Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

Moral and Political Sciences.

Literature and the Fine Arts.

The Mathematical Class is divided into ten sections; each of which consists of six members. Of this class, there are sixty members in Paris, and as many in the departments, where they are divided, in the same manner, into ten sections, each of six members.

The first section comprehends Mathematics.

The second, Mechanical Arts.

The third, Astronomy.

The fourth, Experimental Physics.

The fifth, Chemistry.

The sixth, Natural History and Mineralogy.

The seventh, Botany and vegetable Physics.

The eighth, Anatomy and Zoology.

The ninth, Medicine and Surgery.

The tenth, Rural Economy and the Veterinary Art.

The Moral and Political Class is divided into six sections, each consisting of six members, making in all thirty-six members in Paris, and an equal number in the departments.

The first section comprises the Analysis of Sensations and Ideas.

The second, Morals.

The third, Social Science and Legislation.

The fourth, Political Economy.

The fifth, History.

The sixth, Geography.

The Class of Literature and Fine Arts is divided into eight sections, each of six members, forty-eight of whom reside in Paris, and as many in the departments.

The first section includes Grammar,

The second, Ancient Languages,

The third, Poetry,

The fourth, Antiquities and Monuments

The fifth, Painting,

The sixth, Sculpture,

The seventh, Architecture.

The eighth, Music and Declamation.

Twice in every decade, each class holds a meeting: that of the first class takes place on the first and sixth days; that of the second, on the second and seventh days; and that of the third, on the third and eighth days. Every six months each class elects its president and two

secretaries, who continue in office during that interval.

On the fifth day of the first decade of every month is held a general meeting of the three classes, the purpose of which is to deliberate on affairs relating to the general interests of the Institute. The chair is then taken by the oldest of the three presidents, who, at these meetings, presides over the whole society.

The National Institute has four public quarterly meetings, on the 15th of the months of Vendémiaire, Nivôse, Germinal, and Messidor. Each class annually proposes two prize questions, and in the general meetings, the answers are made public, and the premiums distributed. The united sections of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture nominate the pupils who are to visit Rome, and reside there in the national palace, at the expense of the Republic, in order to study the Fine Arts. Conformably to the decree by which the Institute was organized, six of its members were to travel at the public charge, with a view of collecting information, and acquiring experience in the different sciences; and twenty young men too were to visit foreign countries for the purpose of studying rural economy: but the expenses of the war and other matters have occasioned such a scarcity of money as, hitherto, to impede these undertakings.

The apartments of the Institute are on the first floor of the *Louvre*, or, as it is now styled, the *Palais National des Sciences et des Arts*. These apartments, which were once inhabited by Henry IV, are situated on the west side of that building. Before you arrive at the hall of the Institute, you pass through a handsome antichamber, in which are the statues of Molière, Racine, Corneille, La Fontaine, and Montesquieu. This hall, which is oblong and spacious, formerly served for the meetings of the Academy of Sciences. Its sides are adorned with colonnades, and the ceiling is richly painted and decorated. In the intercolumniations are fourteen marble statues (seven on each side) of some of the most celebrated men that France has produced: namely, Condé, Tourville, Descartes, Bayard, Sully, Turenne, Daguessau, Luxembourg, L'Hôpital, Bossuet, Duquesne, Catinat, Vauban, and Fenelon. Parallel to the walls, tables are set, covered with green cloth, at which the members take their places.

At the upper end of the hall is the chair of the President, and on each side below him are seated the two Secretaries. A little on one side again is the tribune, from which the members who speak address the assembly, after having asked leave of the President, who never quits the chair during the whole meeting. The space appro-

priated to the members is inclosed by a railing, between which and the walls, the hall is surrounded by benches for the spectators, among whom there are generally many of the fair sex.

The library of the Institute consists of three spacious apartments, which are said to contain about sixteen hundred volumes. On one side of the hall is an apartment, destined for the communications of correspondents. There is also an apartment for the secretary and his deputies, and a large room containing a collection of machines and models, (among which are several of shipping), as well as every apparatus necessary for chemical and physical experiments.

Although I have several times attended the private meetings of the three classes, I have thought that the printed accounts of their proceedings, which I subjoin, would be more satisfactory than a hasty sketch from my pen. However, as I promised to describe to you one of the public sittings of the Institute, I shall now inform you of what passed at that held yesterday, the 15th of Nivôse, year X, (5th of January, 1802), at which I was present.

On this occasion, BIGOT-PRÉAMENEU, one of the members of the class of Moral and Political Sciences, was the President. The sitting was opened by proclaiming the nomination of three foreign associates, elected by the Institute in its

general sitting of the 5th of Nivôse; namely, Mr. Jefferson, Sir Joseph Banks, and Haydn, the celebrated musical composer. A prize was then awarded to Citizen Framery, a literary character residing in Paris, for having solved the following question proposed by the class of Literature and Fine Arts. "To analyze the relations existing between music and declamation, and determine the means of applying declamation to music, without detracting from the charms of melody."

Delambre read an account of the life and works of Cousin.

Dégérando, an account of the education which the young savage of Aveyron receives from Itard, physician to the Institution of the Deaf and Dumb.

Prony, the result of observations made with a French instrument and an English one, for the purpose of determining the relation between the French metre and the English foot.

Next were heard notes, by Camus, on the public exhibitions of the productions of French Industry, which took place in the years VI and IX of the Republic.

Then, the report of the restoration of the famous picture known by the name of the *Madonna di Foligno*, which I have already communicated to you.

Buache, the celebrated geographer, read some observations on the ancient map of the Romans, commonly called Peutinger's map, as well as on the geography of the anonymous writer of Ravenna. The sitting was terminated by an account of the life and works of Dumoustier, read by Colin d'Harleville.

The members of the Institute have a full-dress and a half-dress. The former consists of a suit of black, embroidered in dark green silk, with a cocked hat. The latter is the same, but the embroidery is confined to the collar and cuffs of the coat, which is trimmed with a cord edging.

P. S. Yesterday evening was married Mademoiselle Beauharnois, daughter-in-law of the First Consul, to Louis Bonaparte, one of his younger brothers.

LETTER XLVI.

Paris, January 7, 1802.

Knowing you to be an amateur of Italian music, I am persuaded that you will wish to be made acquainted with the theatre where you may enjoy it in full perfection. It is distinguished by the appellation of

OPÉRA BUFFA.

This establishment is not new in the French metropolis. In 1788, Paris was in possession of an excellent company of Italian comedians, who then performed in the *Théâtre de Monsieur*, in the palace of the *Tuileries*, which is now converted into a hall for the sittings of the Council of State. The success of this company had a rapid influence on the taste of the discerning part of the French public. This was the less extraordinary as, perhaps, no Italian sovereign had ever assembled one composed of so many capital performers. In Italy, there are seldom more than two of that degree of merit in a company; the rest are not attended to, because they are not worth the trouble: but here every department was complete, and filled by persons deservedly enjoying a high reputation in their own country; such as MANDINI, RAFFANELLI, SIMONI, MENGOZZI, VIGANONI, ROVEDINO, and Signoras MORICHELLI and BALETTI.

The events of 1792 banished from Paris this admired assemblage. A new company of Italian comedians has been formed here within these few months: they at first occupied a charming little theatre constructed for the use of a society, called *La Loge Olympique*; but are lately removed to the *Théâtre Favart*, on the Boule-

vard. Before the revolution, this was called *le Théâtre Italien.* The façade is decorated with eight very large Ionic pillars. The house is of an oval form, and the interior distribution deserving of praise, in as much as it is far more commodious than that of any other theatre in Paris. The audience here too is generally of a more select description. Among the female amateurs, Madame Tallien is one of its most constant visiters, and, in point of grace and beauty, one of its greatest ornaments.

At the head of this new company, may be placed RAFFANELLI, the same whom I have just mentioned. He is a consummate comedian, and more to be commended in that point of view than as a singer. RAFFANELLI has a countenance to which he gives any cast he pleases: his features, from their wonderful pliability, receive every impression: his eye is quick; his delivery, natural and correct; and his action, easy. Sometimes he carries his buffooneries too far, merely to excite laughter; but as he never fails in his object, this defect may be overlooked. His best characters are *Taddeo* in *Il Rè Theodoro, il Governatore* in *La Molinara,* the Father in *Furberia e Puntiglio,* and the Deaf Man in *Il Matrimonio Secreto.* It is necessary to see him in these different operas to form a just idea of the truth and humour

with which he represents them. Although he is but an indifferent singer, his method is good, and he seizes the spirit of the composer with perfect discrimination. In *morceaux d'ensemble*, he is quite at home, and when he *dialogues* with the orchestra, he shews much energy and feeling. Independently of these gifts, Nature has granted to RAFFANELLI another most valuable privilege. She seems to have exempted him from the impression of time. In 1788 and 89, I saw him frequently, both on and off the stage; after a lapse of upwards of twelve years, he appears again to my eyes exactly the same man. I cannot perceive in him the smallest change.

The tenor of the new company is LAZZARINI. His method too is very good; he sings with taste, expression, and feeling; but his voice is extremely weak: his powers appear exhausted; and it is only by dint of painful efforts that he succeeds in giving to his singing those embellishments which his taste suggests, but which lose their grace and charm when they are laboured. In short, LAZZARINI communicates to the audience an unpleasant sensation in proving that he has real talents.

Neither the same reproaches nor the same praises can be bestowed on PARLAMAGNI. He is a good counter-tenor, but has a harsh-

ness in the high tones, which he does not always reach with perfect justness. He is also deficient in ease and grace. PARLAMAGNI, however, having an advantageous person, and the air of a Frenchman, is a great favourite with the Parisian *dilettanti*. He is a tolerably good comedian, and in some scenes of buffoonery, his acting is natural, and his manner free and unaffected.

The *prima donna* of the Italian company is Signora STRINA-SACCHI. She possesses a fine voice, and no small share of taste, joined to great confidence and a perfect acquaintance with the stage. Sometimes she is rather apt to fatigue the ear by sounds too shrill, and thus breaks the charm produced by her singing. As for her acting, it is as extraordinary as can well be imagined; for her vivacity knows no bounds; and her passion, no restraint. She appears to conceive justly, to feel very warmly, and she plays in the same manner. In her, Nature commands every thing; Art, nothing. The parts in which she shines most, are *La Molinara* and *Gianina*; in these, she literally follows the impulse given her by her situation, without concerning herself in the least, whether it is *secundum artem*; but certain that it is natural and conformable to the character and habits of the personage she represents. *Anima*

in voce is the characteristic of her singing: the same epithet may be applied to her recitative and her acting: in these she displays no less spirit and animation.

After Signora SACCHI, comes Signora PARLAMAGNI. She is a young, and rather pretty woman, not unlike a French actress in her manner. Her voice is free and clear, and her method by no means to be disdained. She wants habit and confidence. This is evident in her performance of a part new to her; for it is only after a few representations that she feels herself at her ease. Then the public appreciate her powers, which she exhibits to advantage; and her exertions are rewarded by reiterated marks of their satisfaction.

Unfortunately it is the nature of an Italian opera-house to have its shelf poorly furnished. It cannot, however, be denied that the managers of the *Opéra Buffa* take every pains to vary and increase their stock. The following are the pieces which I have seen at this theatre.

Furberia e Puntiglio, which is a second-hand imitation of GOLDONI. The music, by Signor MARCELLO DI CAPUA, is agreeable, particularly a quartetto and a cavatina. RAFFANELLI shines in this piece as a first-rate actor.

Il Matrimonio Secreto, the chef-d'œuvre of CIMAROSA, and of its kind, perhaps, the most

charming opera extant. Throughout it, the composer has lavished beauties; there is not to be found in it an air of inferior merit, or which, of itself alone, would not sustain the reputation of a piece. What then can be said of a work in which they are all united? Nothing can surpass the variety, spirit, grace, and originality of the duos, terzettos, quartettos, &c. with which this opera abounds. CIMAROSA has here combined the strength of German harmony with the grace which constitutes the charm of Italian melody. He is particularly famous for the brilliancy of his ideas, the fecundity of his genius, the richness of his style, and, above all, for the finish of his pictures.

The certain effect of such a production is to eclipse every thing put in competition with it. This effect is particularly conspicuous at the representation of other pieces, the music of which is by the same composer.

Gianina e Bernadone, another of CIMAROSA's productions, makes less impression, though it is in the graceful style, what *Il Matrimonio Secreto* is in the serio-comic.

La Molinara, however, upholds the reputation of that celebrated composer, PAËSIELLO. This opera requires no eulogium. Selections from it are daily repeated in the public and private concerts in Paris. *Il Matrimonio Secreto* is a master-

piece of spirit and originality, while *La Molinara* is a model of grace, melody, and simplicity.

To the great regret of the lovers of Italian music, CIMAROSA died not long since, just as he was preparing to visit Paris. But his fame will long survive, as his works bear the stamp of true genius, combined with taste and judgment. His *Italiana in Londra* is just announced for representation.

Il Matrimonio Inaspettato, a composition of PAËSIELLO, is likewise in rehearsal, as well as *Le Nozze di Dorina*, by SARTI, and *La Vilanella Rapita*, by BIANCHI. MOZART too will soon enter the lists; his *Dom Giovanni* is to be speedily brought forward.

The orchestra of the *Opéra Buffa*, though far from numerous, is extremely well-composed. It accompanies the singers with an *ensemble*, a grace, and precision deserving of the highest encomium. BRUNI, a distinguished Italian composer, is the leader of the band, and PARENTI, a professor, known also by several admired productions, presides at the piano-forte.

NEUVILLE, the manager of this theatre, is gone to Italy for the purpose of completing the company by the addition of some eminent performers*. In its present state, the *Opéra Buffa*

* The *Opéra Buffa*, the constant object of the jealousy of the other lyric theatres, because it constitutes the delight of real

maintains its ground. It is thought that the French government will assist it in case of necessity, and even make it a national establishment; a commissary or agent having been appointed to superintend its proceedings.

LETTER XLVII.

Paris, January 9, 1802.

THE exaggerated accounts of the interior state of France which have reached us, through va-

amateurs of music, has, during the year 1802, acquired several new performers. Two of these only, Madame BOLLA and MARTINELLI, deserve particular mention. Madame BOLLA is a good figure on the stage, and though her features are not regular, yet they are susceptible of the most varied expression. Her voice, which is a species of feminine *tenore*, astonishes by the purity and firmness of its grave tones; while her brilliant and sure method easily conceals its small extent in the higher notes. MARTINELLI is a species of counter-tenor. His voice has already lost much of its strength, and has not that clearness which serves as an excuse for every thing; but connoisseurs find that he takes care to calculate its effects so as to make amends, by the art of transitions, for that firmness in which it is deficient. He is much applauded in the *cantabile*, which he sings with uncommon precision, and he particularly shines in the counter-parts which charm in the Italian *finales*. As an actor, MARTINELLI, though inferior to RAFFANELLI, is also remarkable. His manner is easy and natural, and his countenance capable of assuming the most comic expression.

rious channels, during the late obstinate struggle, have diffused so many contradictions, that it is by no means surprising we still continue so ill-informed in England on many points most intimately connected with the morals of the French nation. Respecting none of these, have we been more essentially mistaken than the

PRESENT STATE OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

I am given to understand, from unquestionable authority, that there are at this moment, and have been for the last four years, no less than from thirty-five to forty thousand churches where divine service has been regularly performed throughout the different departments of the Republic. It is therefore a gross error to suppose that the christian religion was extinguished in France. The recent arrangements made between the French government and the See of Rome will consolidate that religion, which was, in a great measure, re-established long before his Holiness occupied the papal chair. I shall illustrate this truth by a summary of the proceedings of the constitutional clergy.

The last general assembly of the clergy of France, held in 1789, the account of which has never been printed, already presented facts which announced that the necessity of reforming

abuses was felt, and the epoch when that reform would take place was foreseen. In this assembly several bishops spoke with much force on the subject.

The disastrous state of the finances, brought about by the shameful dilapidations of the court, occasioned a deficit which it was necessary to make good. This consideration, joined to the spirit of cupidity, jealous of the estates of the clergy, immediately caused every eye to turn towards that mortmain property, in order to employ it in the liquidation of the national debt.

In the *Moniteur*, and other journals of the time, may be seen what successive steps gradually led to the abolition of tythes, and the decision which placed the estates of the clergy at the disposal of the nation.

The civil constitution of the clergy was a severe check given to the many existing abuses. It really brought back the Gallican church to the discipline of the first ages. It snatched from the Pope the power of giving the canonical institution to bishops. Those who have thought proper to tax with novelty this constitution, have only to look into history. They will see that, during twelve hundred years, bishops received the canonical institution from the metropolitans, and not from the Pope. Thus to tax with intrusion the constitutional bishops,

and condemn them because they have received that institution from the metropolitans, is to condemn the first twelve centuries of christianity.

This civil constitution served as a pretext to the dignified clergy, irritated at the loss of their estates, for concerting a combined resistance to the new laws, in the hope that this resistance would lead to a subversion which would restore to them their riches. Thence the refusal of the oath "to be faithful to the nation, to the law, "and to the king, to guide faithfully the flock "intrusted to their care, and to maintain with all "their power the constitution decreed by the "assembly, and sanctioned by the king." Thence the line of division between the clergy who had taken the oath and those who had not.

The Constituent Assembly, who had decreed the above oath, declared, that the refusal of giving this pledge of fidelity should be considered as a voluntary resignation. The royal sanction had rendered the above decree a law of the State. Almost the whole of the bishops, a great number of rectors, and other ecclesiastics, refused to take this oath, already taken by several among them who were deputies to the assembly.

They were, in consequence, declared to have resigned; and measures were taken for supplying

their place. The people proceeded to effect this by electors authorized by law. A respectable number of ecclesiastics, who had already submitted to the law, accepted the elections. These priests thought that obedience to the national authority which respected and protected religion, was a catholic dogma. What resistance could be made to legitimate power, which neither attacked the dogma, nor morality, nor the interior and essential discipline of the church? It was, say they, resisting God himself. They thought that the pastor was chosen, and sent solely for the care of the flock intrusted to him; that, when difficult circumstances, flight, for instance, voluntary or forced, the prohibition from all functions, pronounced by the civil power, rendered the holy ministry impossible, or that the pastor could not exercise it, without declaring himself in open insurrection, the pretended unremoveable rights then ceased with the sacred duties which they could not discharge, without being accused of rebellion.

The dissentient bishops drew many priests into their party. Most of them spread themselves over Europe, where they calumniated at their ease the patriotic clergy. Those of their adherents who had remained in the interior of this country, kindled a civil war, tormented

people's consciences, and disturbed the peace of families, &c. This conduct, which engendered the horrible scenes in La Vendée, provoked repressive measures, emanated from legislative authority.

Enemies without and within, say the constitutional clergy, wished to create a disgust to liberty, by substituting to it licentiousness. And, indeed, the partisans of the dissentient clergy were seen to coalesce with the unbelievers, in order to produce the sacrilegious disorders which broke out every where in the year 1793.

The clergy who had taken the oath had organized the dioceses; the bishops, in general, had bestowed great pains in spreading in every parish the word of the gospel; for they preached themselves, and this was more than was done by their predecessors, who, engaged only in spending, frequently in a shameful manner, immense revenues, seldom or never visited their dioceses. The constitutional clergy followed a plan more conformable to the gospel, which gained them the affection of the well-disposed part of the nation.

These priests were of opinion that the storm which threatened religion, required imperiously the immediate presence of the pastor, and that, in the day of battle, it was necessary to be in

person at the breach. They were of opinion that the omission or impossibility of fulfilling minute and empty formalities, imposed by a Concordat, rejected from the beginning by all the public bodies and the church of France, and annihilated at the moment by the will of the representatives of the nation, sanctioned by royal authority, could not exempt them from accepting holy functions presented by all the constituted authorities, and on which evidently depended the preservation of religion, the salvation of the faithful, and the peace of the State.

But, when persecution manifested itself, the clergy who had taken the oath, became equally the victims of persecuting rage. Some failed in this conjuncture; but the greater number remained intrepid in their principles. Accordingly several constitutional bishops and priests were dragged to the scaffold. If, on the one hand, the dastardly GOBEL was guillotined, the same fate attended the respectable EXPILLY, bishop of Quimper, AMOURETTE, bishop of Lyons, and GOUTTES, bishop of Autun, &c.

The dissentient clergy reproach some constitutional priests with having married, and even with having apostatized; but they say not that, among the dissentient, there are some who have done the same. If the number of the

latter is smaller, it is because the greater part of them were out of France; but what would they have done, if, like the constitutional clergy, they had either had the axe suspended over their head, or the guillotine accompanying all their steps?

In England, where the French priests were not thus exposed, there are some who have likewise married, and even some who have apostatized.

It is well known that, amidst the terrors of impiety, GRÉGOIRE, bishop of Blois, declared that he braved them, and remained attached to his principles and duties, as a christian and bishop. He firmly believed that, in doing so, he was pronouncing his sentence of death, and, for eighteen months, he was in expectation of ascending the scaffold. The same courage animated the majority of the constitutional bishops and priests. They exercised secretly their ministry, and consoled the faithful. As soon as the rage for persecution began to abate, GRÉGOIRE and some other bishops, who had kept up a private correspondence with the clergy of various dioceses for the purpose of encouraging them, concerted together in order to reorganize worship. In Nivôse year III (January 1795), GRÉGOIRE demanded this liberty of worship of the National Convention. He was

very sure of meeting with outrages, and he experienced some; but to speak in the tribune, was speaking to France and to all Europe, and, in the then state of things, he was almost certain of staggering public opinion, which would force the Convention to grant the free exercise of religion. Accordingly, some time after having refused the liberty of worship on the demand of GRÉGOIRE, that assembly granted it, though with evident reluctance, on a Report of BOISSY D'ANGLAS, which insulted every species of worship.

The constitutional bishops had already anticipated this moment by their writings and their pastoral letters, &c. They then compiled two works, entitled *Lettres Encycliques*, to which the bishops and priests of the various dioceses adhered. The object of these works, which are monuments of wisdom, piety, and courage, was to reorganize public worship in all the dioceses, according to the principles of the primitive church. They pronounced a formal exclusion from ecclesiastical functions against all prevaricating priests or married ones, as well as all those who had the cowardice to deliver up their authority for preaching, and abdicate their functions. Some interested persons thought this too severe. Those bishops persisted in their decision, and, by way of answer, they reprinted

a translation of the celebrated treatise of St. Cyprian de Lapsis. On all sides, they reanimated religious zeal, caused pastors for the various sees to be elected by the people, and consecrated by the metropolitan bishops. They held synods, the acts of which form a valuable collection, equally honourable to their zeal and knowledge. They did more.

For a long time past the custom of holding councils had fallen into disuse. They convoked a national council, notwithstanding the unfavourableness of a silent persecution; and, in spite of the penury which afflicted the pastors, the latter had the courage to devote themselves in order to concur in it. This council was opened with the greatest solemnity on the 15th of August, 1797, the day of the Assumption of the Virgin. It sat for three months. The canons and decrees of this assembly, which have been translated into Italian and German, have been printed in one volume.

This council was published in the different dioceses, and its regulations were put into force. During this time, the government, ever hostile to religion, had not abandoned the project of persecuting and perhaps of destroying it. The voice of the public, who called for this religion, and held in esteem the constitu-

tional clergy as religious and patriotic, checked, in some respects, the hatred of the Directory and its agents. Then the spirit of persecution took a circuitous way to gain its end: this was to cry down religion and its ministers, to promote theophilanthropy, and enforce the transferring of Sunday to the *décade*, or tenth day of every republican month.

The bishops, assembled at Paris, again caused this project to miscarry, and, in their name, GRÉGOIRE compiled two consultations against the transferring of Sunday to the *décade*. The adhesion of all the clergy was the fruit of his labour; but all this drew on him numerous outrages, the indigence to which he was at that time reduced, and multiplied threats of deportation. The functions which he had discharged, and the esteem of the friends of religion, formed around him a shelter of opinion that saved him from deportation, to which were condemned so many unfortunate and virtuous constitutional priests, who were crowded, with the refractory among others, into vessels lying in the road of Rochefort.

GRÉGOIRE remonstrated against this grievance, and obtained an alleviation for his brethren; but it is to be remarked that, in giving an account of their enlargement, the dissentient priests have taken good care not to mention to whom they

were indebted for having provoked in their behalf this act of humanity and justice.

The constitutional clergy continued their labours, struggling incessantly against calumny and libels, either from their dissentient brethren or from the agents of the directorial government. This clergy convoked a second national council for the year 1801. It was preceded by a vast number of synods, and by eight metropolitan councils.

This second national council was opened at Paris on St. Peter's day of the same year. Several decrees had already been carried, one of which renewed, in the face of the whole church, the example of the bishops of Africa, by a solemn invitation of the dissentients to conferences for the grand affair which separated them from the constitutional clergy. The different congregations were on the point of presenting to the general meeting their labours on the dogma, morality, and discipline. A report on the liturgy by GRÉGOIRE, bishop of Blois and vice-president of the council; a similar report on the plan of education for ecclesiastics, occupied the members of this assembly, when all at once the government manifested its wish to see the council closed, on account of the Concordat which it had just arranged with the Pope.

Notwithstanding this proceeding, which trenched on the rights of a national church, the fathers of the council suspended their remonstrances, in order not to afford any pretext to those who might have wished to perpetuate religious troubles. Wherefore, after having sat six weeks and pronounced the suspension of the national council, &c. they separated quietly without quitting Paris.

Their presence was necessary for the execution of the decree of the conferences. The eighteen members destined for that purpose by the council, after having held several meetings, presented themselves at the Cathedral of *Notre-Dame*, the place appointed and proclaimed by the council throughout all the extent of France. For three successive days, morning and evening, they there assembled. At the expiration of that time, on seeing that the dissentient kept themselves concealed, the members of the constitutional clergy took for witnesses of this generous and open proceeding the vast body of people who had repaired to *Notre-Dame*, and by two energetic and moving discourses, delivered by Belmay, bishop of Carcassonne, and Grégoire, bishop of Blois, terminated the council after the accustomed prayers.

M. Spina, archbishop of Corinth, charged by the court of Rome with part of the affairs to be

transacted with the First Consul, about the middle of September, sent to the constitutional bishops a brief, which he announced to come from Pius VII, in order to induce them on the part of the Pope to give up the episcopal sees they had occupied, and return to unity. An invitation so insulting, received by all these bishops, drew on M. SPINA energetic answers, which made the Pope and himself sensible how wrong they were to accuse of intrusion and schism bishops, whose canonical institution was conformable to that of the bishops of the first twelve centuries, and who had always professed the warmest love for catholic unity.

But as there was little good to be expected from M. SPINA, some bishops made their complaints to the government in a spirited and well-composed memorial, denouncing the Pope's brief as an attack on the liberties of the Gallican church and the rights of the Republic. This measure had its effect. The government passed a decree for prohibiting the publication of the Rescripts of Rome, if they should not be found conformable to the rules and usages observed in France.

During these transactions, the Cardinal Legate, CAPRARA, arrived in Paris. The Concordat had just been signed. The constitutional bishops, without remonstrating against it, no

sooner learnt that the government wished them to resign, than they hastened to do so, the more willingly, as they had a thousand times made the promise whenever the good of religion and of the country should require it. A similar generosity was expected on the part of the emigrated bishops. Have they been to blame in refusing? This question may, in a great measure, depend on the arrangement of the Concordat, and the imperious and menacing tone of the court of of Rome which demanded of them the resignation of their former sees.*

* For the gratification of the reader is here annexed an account of the Pope's conduct in regard to the constitutional clergy, since the promulgation of the Concordat.

At length the nominations took place. A small number of those appointed to the sixty new dioceses, were taken from the constitutional clergy. The others were taken from the mass of the refractory and those who had retracted, and the greater number formed the most eloquent apology of the constitutional bishops. They all received the institution from the Pope, who announced it with an air of triumph to the college of Cardinals, in his collocution of the 24th of May, 1802. He had good reason to congratulate himself at this epoch, the more so as he had been made to believe that the re-elected constitutional clergy had made a retractation, and received penitence and absolution. The author of this calumny was BERNIER, who had been charged by the Cardinal Legate with a step so worthy of his former military exploits. It was solemnly contradicted. After the decree of absolution which BERNIER had ventured to present to these bishops was thrown with indignation into the

LETTER XLVIII.

Paris, January 10, 1802.

GOING the other day to call on M. S———i, I stopped by the way, to examine an edifice which, when I first visited Paris in 1784, engaged no small share of public attention. It was, at that time, one of the principal objects pointed out to the curiosity of strangers. At

fire of PORTALIS, the counsellor of state charged by the government with religious affairs, who was witness to the transaction. Indeed, he had in this encouraged the bishops to imitate his own example in getting rid, by the same means, of a brief which the Legate had transmitted to him in order to absolve him from the guilt he might have incurred by taking part in the revolution.

The government wished to pacify religious troubles; but the majority of the dissentient bishops began to foment new disputes, by requiring retractations from the constitutional clergy, who, for the most part, have stood firm amidst privations of every description. However, the mischief made not the progress which there was every reason to apprehend: the government pronounced its opinion thereon by prohibiting bishops from requiring any thing more than submission to the Concordat, and obedience to the new bishops. Notwithstanding the wise intentions of the government, sincerely desirous of peace and concord, it is only in the dioceses fallen to the constitutional bishops that a good understanding prevails. Most of the dissentient clergy continue to promote discord, and torment their constitutional brethren. BOISCHOLLET, bishop of Séez, Mon-

one period of the revolution, you will, doubtless, recollect the frequent mention made of the

PANTHEON.

Conceive my surprise, on learning that this stately building, after having employed the hands of so many men, for the best part of half a century, was not only still unfinished; but had threatened approaching ruin. Yes—like the Gothic abbey at Fonthill, it would, by all accounts, have fallen to the ground, without the aid of vandalism, had not prompt and efficacious measures been adopted, to avert the impending mischief.

This monument, originally intended for the reception of the shrine of St. Geneviève, once the patroness of the Parisians, is situated on an eminence, formerly called *Mont St. Étienne*, to the left of

TAULT, bishop of Angers, and some others, have been sent for to Paris, in order to be reprimanded and cautioned to behave better.

It is proper to mention the documents which Cardinal CAPRARA has distributed to all the bishops. They form a collection of thirteen papers, which might not improperly be called an analysis of the decretals of Isidorus. On these, no doubt, good canonists will debate at some future day, in order to shame the court of Rome, by pointing out its absurdities and blunders; and certainly the respect which catholics owe to the Holy See ought not to prevent them from resisting the pretensions of the Pope.

the top of the *Rue St. Jacques*, near the *Place de l'Estrapade*. It was begun under the reign of Lewis XV, who laid the first stone on the 6th of September, 1764. During the American war, the works were suspended; but, early in the year 1784, they were resumed with increasing activity. The sculpture of this church already presented many attributes analogous to its object, when, in 1793, it was converted into a Pantheon.

The late M. SOUFFLOT furnished the plan for the church, which, in point of magnificence, does honour both to the architect and to the nation.

Its form is a Greek cross, three hundred and forty feet in length by two hundred and fifty in breadth. The porch, which is an imitation of that of the Pantheon at Rome, consists of a peristyle of twenty-two pillars of the Corinthian order. Eighteen of these are insulated, and are each five feet and a half in diameter by fifty-eight in height, including their base and capital. They support a pediment, which combines the boldness of the Gothic with the beauty of the Greek style. This pediment bears the following inscription:

"AUX GRANDS HOMMES,
"LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE."

In the delirium of the revolutionary fever, when great crimes constituted great men, this sanctuary of national gratitude was polluted. MARAT, that man of blood, was, to use the modern phraseology, *pantheonized*, that is, interred in the Pantheon. When the delirium had, in some measure, subsided, and reason began to resume her empire, he was *dispantheonized*; and, by means of quick-lime, his canonized bones were confounded with the dust. This apotheosis will ever be a blot in the page of the history of the revolution.

However, it operated as a check on the inconsiderate zeal of hot-brained patriots in bestowing the honours of the Pantheon on the undeserving. MIRABEAU was, consequently, *dispantheonized*; and, in all probability, this temple will, in future, be reserved for the ashes of men truly great; legislators whose eminent talents and virtues have benefited their fellow-citizens, or warriors, who, by distinguishing themselves in their country's cause, have really merited that country's gratitude.

The interior of this temple consists of four naves, in whose centre rises an elegant dome, which, it is said, is to be painted in fresco by DAVID. The naves are decorated by one hundred and thirty fluted pillars, also of the Corinthian order, supporting an entablature, which

serves as a base for lofty *tribunes*, bordered by stone balustrades. These pillars are three feet and a half in diameter by nearly twenty-eight feet in height.

The inside of the dome is incircled by sixteen Corinthian pillars, standing at an equal distance, and lighted by glazed apertures in part of the intercolumniations. They support a cupola, in the centre of which is an opening, crowned by another cupola of much more considerable elevation.

To survey the interior of the Pantheon, in its present state, is rather a matter of eager curiosity than of pleasing enjoyment. The precautions taken to prevent the fall of the whole building, which was apprehended from the almost tottering state of the dome, have necessitated the erection of such a quantity of scaffolding, that it is no easy task to gain an uninterrupted view of its majestic pillars, of the delicate and light foliage of its capitals, and of its proud and triple canopy. I mounted the ladders, and braved the dust of stone and plaster, amidst the echoing sound of saws, chisels, and mallets, at work in different directions.

Mercier is said to have offended several of the partisans of Voltaire by observing that, through a strange inconsistency, the constant flatterer not only of royalty in general, but of kings in

particular, and of all the great men and vices of the age in which he lived, here shares the gratitude of a republic with the *man of nature and truth*, as Jean-Jacques is styled on his sepulchral monument. Thus, in the first instance, says he, a temple, consecrated to stern republican virtue, contains the remains of a great poet who could not strike superstition, without wounding morals.—Unquestionably, the *Pucelle* is a work, which, like a blight on a promising crop, has committed incalculable ravage among the rising generation. Notwithstanding the numerous inscriptions which now adorn the tomb of Voltaire, perhaps, at some future distant period, he may experience the fate of Mirabeau, and be *dispantheonized*.

But why meddle with the cold remains of any great genius? Would it not have been more rational to inscribe the name of Rousseau in this national temple, and leave his corpse to rot undisturbed, in the *Ile des Peupliers*, at Ermenonville.

Though circumstances prevented me from ascending to the dome, you will, no doubt, expect me to say something of its exterior architecture. It represents a circular temple, formed by thirty-four pillars, like those of the interior, of the Corinthian order, and each, base and capital included, thirty-four feet in height by three

feet and one third in diameter. This colonnade is supported by a circular stylobate, which rests on an octagon base, and is surrounded by a gallery, bordered by an iron balustrade. The cupola, rising above the attic, would appear crushed, were not a stranger apprised that the pedestal on the top is to be surmounted by a bronze figure of Fame, twenty-eight feet in height, and weighing fifty-two thousand pounds. The pedestal is encircled by a second gallery at an elevation of one hundred and sixty-six feet, to reach which you ascend a flight of four hundred and sixty stone steps. As the Pantheon itself stands on a considerable eminence, the prospect from this gallery is extensive and commanding.

This sumptuous edifice may truly be said to exhibit a monument of the weakness of man. Like him, before arrived at maturity, it is attacked by indisposition. The architects, like so many physicians, were not for some time agreed as to the seat of the evil. Each proposed his means of cure as the most infallible; but all coincided in one opinion, that the danger was imminent. Their skill has been exerted, and, no doubt, with effect; for all apprehension of further mischief is now removed.

When I was taking a last look at this proud temple, I could not help regretting that one

half of the money already expended on it, had not been appropriated to the erection of airy hospitals in the different quarters of this populous city. Any one who had formerly visited the *Hôtel-Dieu* in Paris would, I am confident, have participated in this sentiment.

What strange fatality impels men to persevere in such unprofitable erections? This was the first question which suggested itself to me, on getting fairly out of the Pantheon. Is it to gratify an excess of national vanity, or create a superior degree of admiration in the mind of foreigners? If so, the aim is missed: for, as majesty, fallen from the pinnacle of power, becomes more interesting, so do ruins inspire greater veneration than the most pompous structure, towering in the splendour of its perfection. Experience tells us that every truncated pillar, every remnant, in short, of past grandeur, rouses attention, and speaks home to the contemplative mind; while these modern edifices, however firmly erect on their base, excite, comparatively speaking, but a feeble interest. In future ages, perhaps, when the Pantheon of Paris shall be prostrate on the ground, and the wreck of its stately dome be overrun with moss and ivy, it may, probably, attract as much notice as the far-famed temple of Jupiter-Amnon.

P. S. On the evening of the 8th, BONAPARTE left Paris for Lyons, where TALLEYRAND, Minister for foreign affairs, has been for some days preparing for the great event which is expected to take place. When a public measure is in agitation, the result is generally anticipated by the eagerness of mankind; and whispers the least audible are magnified into authentic information. Those even who may be presumed to derive their intelligence from the best sources, not unfrequently misconceive what they have heard, and consequently mislead others. I will not, however, mislead you, by repeating any of the rumours in circulation here: in a short time, the *Moniteur* will, no doubt, explain the real object of this journey.

LETTER XLIX.

Paris, January 12, 1802.

As no city in Europe presents so many advantages as this for the cultivation of literature, arts, and sciences, it is not surprising that it should contain great numbers of literati, artists, and men of science, who form themselves into different associations. Independently of the National Institute, Paris can boast of several other

SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

The following are the names of those held in most esteem.

Société Philotechnique.
Société Libre des Sciences, Lettres, et Arts.
Athenée (*ci-devant* Lycée) des Arts.
Société Philomatique.
Société Académique des Sciences.
Société Galvanique.
Société des Belles-Lettres.
Académie de Législation.
Observateurs de l'Homme.
Athénée de Paris, *ci-devant* Lycée Républicain.

Though, in all these societies, you may meet with a great number of estimable men, many of whose names may be found in the major part of them, yet that which holds the first rank in the public esteem, as well from the respectability of the members of whom it is composed, as from the proofs of talents which are necessary in order to be admitted into it, is the

SOCIÉTÉ PHILOTECHNIQUE.

Indeed, almost all its members are men whose works have rendered them celebrated

throughout Europe. Hitherto, with the exception of the National Institute, this is the only society to which the government has granted the honour of receiving it as a body, or by deputation, on solemn occasions; and by that alone, it has *nationalized*, at least tacitly, its institution. It is also the only one which, to the present moment, has preserved the right of holding its public and private sittings in the *Louvre*, since that palace has been ordered to be wholly evacuated. A report has been spread that the hall of the *cidevant* French Academy is destined for it; but as yet nothing is determined in this respect.

Its number is confined to sixty resident members, and twenty free associates or veterans. It is necessary to have been ten years among the resident members, in order to have a right to be admitted into the number of the twenty free associates, who enjoy prerogatives, without being bound to take a part in the labours of the society. This favour, however, may be granted to those who are for a time called from Paris by public functions, such as embassies, prefectures, &c.

This society meets on the 2nd, 12th and 22nd of every month at seven o'clock in the evening. Its various committees have their particular days for assembling. Its officers consist of a President, a Vice-President, a general and perpetual

Secretary, a temporary Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Keeper of the records.

It holds its public sittings at noon on the last Sunday of the second month of every *trimestre*, or quarter of the republican year, namely, Brumaire, Pluviôse, Floréal, and Thermidor.

It is composed of men of science, literati, and artists; but, resembling a family rather than a society, its principles of friendship admit of no classes. On the 19th of every month, it celebrates its foundation by an entertainment, at which its members have the liberty of introducing their friends.

It reckons among its members, in the Sciences, Lacépède, Fourcroy, Cuvier, Geoffroy, Rotrou, Ruel, Le Clerc, Gautherot, Gingembre, &c.

In Literature, Boufflers, Legouvé, Andrieux, Joseph Lavallée, Marius Arnaud, Sicard, Guillard, Guichard, François de Neufchâteau, Margourit, Renaud de St. Jean-d'Angely, Amaury and Alexandre Duval, Say, Després, Marsolier, Brousse, Des Faucherets, Pigault Le Brun, Pougens, Framery, Colin d'Harleville, La Chabeaussière, &c.

In the Arts, viz. Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Music, Declamation, and Dancing, Regnault, Valenciennes, Silvestre the Father,

Barbier the elder, Barthelemy, Sauvage, Lethiers, Pajou, Chaudet, Norry, Legrand, Bienaimé, Decotte, director of the medals, Foubert, honorary administrator of the Central Museum, La Rive the tragedian, Gossec, Martini, Le Sueur, Gavaux, Kalkbrumer, Adrien the elder, Gardel, &c.

The general and perpetual Secretary is Joseph Lavallée.

SOCIÉTÉ LIBRE DES SCIENCES, LETTRES, ET ARTS.

It is composed of the junction of the old *Museum of Paris* and of the Society called that of the *Nine Sisters*. It is divided into classes, is unlimited in the number of its members, admits associated correspondents and foreigners, holds its private sittings at the *Oratoire* in the *Rue St. Honoré*, every Thursday, and its public ones at six o'clock in the evening on the 9th of the first months of the *trimestre*; namely, Vendémiaire, Nivôse, Germinal, and Messidor. Its officers consist of a President, taken alternately from the three classes, of two temporary Secretaries, a Treasurer, and a Keeper of the records.

This Society is modelled a little too much after the Institute, and it is easy to see that the former aims at rivaling the latter. This *esprit de corps*, which cannot well be perceived

but by nice observers, has this advantage; it inspires a sort of emulation. But the society having neglected to limit the number of its members, and having thereby deprived itself of the means of appearing difficult as to admission, it thence results that its labours are not equally stamped with the impression of real talent; and if, in fact, it be ambitious, that is a great obstacle to its views.

ATHENÉE (*ci-devant* LYCÉE) DES ARTS.*

In imitation of our Royal Society, it comprises not only the sciences, literature, and the arts, but also arts and trades, mechanics, inventions, &c. Its members are not idle, and they are a useful body, as they excite emulation by medals, civic crowns, premiums, and rewards. Their number is considerable and unlimited; a condition which is an evil in the last-mentioned society, and a good in this, whose nature is not so much to shine as to encourage industry.

It was for a while in disrepute, because DESAUDRAY, the director who founded it, exercised over it a tyrannic sway; it has succeeded in getting rid of him, and, since then, several

* This Society has laid aside the title of *Lyceum* since the decree of the government, which declares that this denomination is to be applied only to the establishments for public instruction.

persons of merit, who had before kept aloof, aspire to the honour of being admitted into it.

For some time past it has adopted a custom, too obsequious and absurd, of choosing none but ministers for its Presidents. By this, it exposes its liberty and its opinion, and gives itself chains, the weight of which it will feel some day, when too late to shake them off.

It holds its general sittings at the *Oratoire* every Monday, when it hears the reports of its numerous committees, who have their particular days for meeting. Its public sittings are held at the same place, but at no fixed periods.

Its officers consist of a President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries, three Conservators, a Treasurer, and a Keeper of the records.

It has associated correspondents throughout Europe.

SOCIÉTÉ PHILOMATIQUE.

It is wholly devoted to natural, physical, and mathematical sciences. It assembles on Fridays, in the *Rue d'Anjou, Faubourg St. Germain.* It has no public sittings; but is merely a private meeting of men of learning, who publish once a month a *bulletin* very important to the sciences, and to be commended, besides, for its composition, perspicuity, and conciseness. This publica-

tion is of a 4to size, consists of a single sheet of print, and has for its title *Bulletin des Sciences, par la Société Philomatique.*

SOCIÉTÉ ACADÉMIQUE DES SCIENCES.

This Society is recently formed. It employs itself on the Sciences only; has not yet held any public sittings, nor published any memoirs. Consequently, nothing can yet be said of its labours, or interior regulation.

SOCIÉTÉ GALVANIQUE.

Its name indicates the sole object of its labours. It is newly formed, and composed of men eminently distinguished in Medicine and Physics. It has called in a few literati. Its officers are the same in the other Societies. It holds its sittings at the *Oratoire* every Tuesday at eleven o'clock in the morning. Its labours are pursued with ardour, and it has already made several important experiments. It announces zeal, and talents, as well as great defects, and aspires to fame, perhaps, a little too much; but it may still maintain its ground.

SOCIÉTÉ DES BELLES-LETTRES.

It is somewhat frivolous. Public sittings every month. Half poetry, half music. It meets at the *Oratoire* every Wednesday at seven o'clock

in the evening. It arose from a small emigration of the *Lycée des Arts*, at this day *l'Athénée*, during the tyranny of DESAUDRAY, and originally bore the title of *Rosati*. A few men of merit, a great number of youths, and some useless members. Too many futile readings, too many fugitive verses, too many little rivalships. It is faulty on account of its regulations, the basis of which is weak, and it exhibits too much parsimony in its expenses. It has not enough of that public consideration which perpetuates establishments of this description. Under such circumstances, it is to be apprehended that it will not support itself.

ACADÉMIE DE LÉGISLATION.

This is a fine institution, recently founded. It is composed of the most celebrated lawyers, and a few distinguished literati. It meets on the first of every month, gives every day courses of lectures on all the branches of jurisprudence to a great number of pupils; has established conferences, where these pupils form themselves to the art of speaking, by pleading on given points of law. It publishes two periodical works every month, the one entitled, *Bulletin de Jurisprudence*, and the other, *Annales de Jurisprudence*. The preliminary discourse of the first

volume of the latter is by JOSEPH LAVALLÉE, and has done him considerable credit. He is, however, a literary character, and not a lawyer.

This academy has officers of the same description as those of the other Societies. Senator LANJUINAIS is the President at this moment. It occupies the *Hôtel de la Briffe, Quai Voltaire.*

SOCIÉTÉ DES OBSERVATEURS DE L'HOMME.

It assembles at the *Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld, Rue de Seine, Faubourg St. Germain,* and is composed of very estimable men. Its labours, readings, and discussions are too metaphysical. In point of officers, it is formed like the other Societies. Citizen JUAFFRET is perpetual Secretary.

ATHÉNÉE DE PARIS, *ci-devant* LYCÉE RÉPUBLICAIN.

This society has survived the revolutionary storm, having been established as far back as the year 1787. According to the *programme* published for the present year 1802, its object is to propagate the culture of the sciences and literature; to make known the useful improvements in the arts; to afford pleasure to persons of all ages, by presenting to every one such attractions as may suit his taste, and to

unite in literary conferences the charms of the mildest of human occupations.

To strangers, the *Athénée* holds out many advantages. On being presented by one of the founders or a subscriber, and paying the annual subscription of 96 francs, you receive an admission-ticket, which, however, is not transferrable. This entitles you to attend several courses of lectures by some of the most eminent professors, such as Fourcroy, Cuvier, La Harpe, Dégérando, Suë, Hassenfratz, Legrand, &c. The subjects for the year are as follows:

Experimental Physics, Chymistry, Natural History, Anatomy and Physiology, Botany, Technology or the application of sciences to arts and trades, Literature, Moral Philosophy, Architecture, together with the English, Italian, and German languages.

The lectures are always delivered twice, and not unfrequently thrice a day, in a commodious room, provided with all the apparatus necessary for experiments. On a Sunday, an account of the order in which they are to be given in the course of the following week, is sent to every subscriber. There is no half-subscription, nor any admission *gratis*; but ladies pay no more than 48 francs for their annual ticket.

Independently of so many sources of instruction, the *Athénée*, as is expressed in the *programme*, really affords to subscribers the resources and charms of a numerous and select society. The apartments, which are situated near the *Palais du Tribunat*, in the *Rue du Lycée*, are open to them from nine o'clock in the morning to eleven at night. Several rooms are appropriated to conversation; one of which, provided with a piano-forte and music, serves as a rendezvous for the ladies. The subscribers have free access to the library, where they find the principal literary and political journals and papers, both French and others, as well as every new publication of importance. A particular room, in which silence is duly observed, is set apart for reading.

LETTER L.

Paris, January 13, 1802.

I HAVE spoken to you of palaces, museums, churches, bridges, public gardens, playhouses, &c. as they have chanced to fall under my observation; but there still remain houses of more than one description which I have not yet noticed, though they are certainly more numerous here

than in any other city in Europe. I shall now speak of

COFFEEHOUSES.

Their number in Paris has been reckoned to exceed seven hundred; but they are very far from enjoying a comparative degree of reputation. Celebrity is said to be confined to about a dozen only, which have risen into superior consequence from various causes. Except a few resorted to by the literati or wits of the day, or by military officers, they are, in general, the rendezvous of the idle, and the refuge of the needy. This is so true, that a frequenter of a coffeehouse scarcely ever lights a fire in his own lodging during the whole winter. No sooner has he quitted his bed, and equipped himself for the day, than he repairs to his accustomed haunt, where he arrives about ten o'clock in the morning, and remains till eleven at night, the hour at which coffeehouses are shut up, according to the regulation of the police. Not unfrequently persons of this description make a cup of coffee, mixed with milk, with the addition of a penny-roll, serve for dinner; and, be their merit what it may, they are seldom so fortunate as to be consoled by the offer of a rich man's table.

Here, no person who wishes to be respected,

thinks of lounging in a coffeehouse, because it not only shews him to be at a loss to spend his time, which may fairly be construed into a deficiency of education or knowledge, but also implies an absolute want of acquaintance with what is termed good company. Certain it is that, with the exceptions before-mentioned, a stranger must not look for good company in a coffeehouse in Paris; if he does, he will find himself egregiously disappointed.

Having occasion to see an advertisement in an English newspaper, I went a few evenings ago to one of the most distinguished places of this sort in the *Palais du Tribunat:* the room was extremely crowded. In five minutes, one of the company whom I had seen taking out his watch on my entrance, missed it; and though many of the by-standers afterwards said they had no doubt that a person of gentlemanly exterior, who stood near him, had taken it, still it would have been useless to charge that person with the fact, as the watch had instantly gone through many hands, and the supposed accomplices had been observed to decamp with uncommon expedition. What diverted me not a little, was that the person suspected coolly descanted on the imprudence of taking out a valuable watch in a crowd of strangers; and, after declaiming in the most vi-

rulent terms against the dishonesty of mankind, he walked away very quietly. Notwithstanding his appearance and manner were so much in his favour, he had no sooner effected his retreat than some subalterns of the police, not thief-takers, but *mouchards* or spies, some of whom are to be met with in every principal coffeehouse, cautioned the master of the house against suffering his presence in future, as he was a notorious adventurer.

You must not, however, imagine from this incident, that a man cannot enter a coffeehouse in Paris, without being a sufferer from the depredations of the nimble-fingered gentry. Such instances are not, I believe, very frequent here; and though it is universally allowed that this capital abounds with adventurers and pickpockets of every description, I am of opinion that there is far less danger to be apprehended from them than from their archetypes in London. Every one knows that, in our refined metropolis, a lady of fashion cannot give a ball or a rout, without engaging Mr. Townsend, or some other Bow-street officer, to attend in her hall, in order that his presence may operate as a check on the audacity of knavish intruders.

The principal coffeehouses here are fitted up with taste and elegance. Large mirrors form no inconsiderable part of their decoration. There

are no partitions to divide them into boxes. The tables are of marble; the benches and stools are covered with Utrecht velvet. In winter, an equal degree of warmth is preserved in them by means of a large stove in the centre, which, from its figure, is an ornamental piece of furniture; while, in summer, the draught of air which it maintains, contributes not a little to cool the room. In the evening, they are lighted by *quinquets* in a brilliant manner.

Formerly, every coffeehouse in Paris used to have its chief orator; in those of the more remote part of the suburbs you might, I am informed, hear a journeyman tailor or shoemaker hold forth on various topics. With the revolution, politics were introduced; but, at the present day, that is a subject which seems to be entirely out of the question.

In some coffeehouses, where literati and critics assemble, authors and their works are passed in review, and to each is assigned his rank and estimation. When one of these happens to have been checked in his dramatic career by an *undiscerning* public, he becomes, in his turn, the most merciless of critics.

In many of these places, the "busy hum" is extremely tiresome; German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Russ, together with English and French, all spoken at the same time and

in the same room, make a confusion of tongues as great almost as that which reigned at Babel. In addition to the French newspapers, those of England and Germany may be read; but as they are often bespoke by half a dozen persons in succession, it requires no small degree of patience to wait while these quidnuncs are conning over every paragraph.

Independently of coffee, tea, and chocolate, ices, punch and liqueurs may be had in the principal coffeehouses; but nothing in the way of dinner or supper, except at the subterraneous ones in the *Palais du Tribunat*, though there are many of a rather inferior order where substantial breakfasts in the French style are provided. Whether Voltaire's idea be just, that coffee clears the brain, and stimulates the genius, I will not pretend to determine: but if this be really the case, it is no wonder that the French are so lively and full of invention; for coffee is an article of which they make an uncommon consumption. Indeed, if Fame may be credited, the prior of a monastery in Arabia, on the word of a shepherd who had remarked that his goats were particularly frisky when they had eaten the berries of the coffee-tree, first made a trial of their virtue on the monks of his convent, in order to prevent them from sleeping during divine service.

Be this as it may, Soliman Aga, ambassador of the Porte to Lewis XIV, in 1669, was the first who introduced the use of coffee in Paris. During a residence of ten years in the French capital, he had conciliated the friendship of many persons of distinction, and the ladies in particular took a pleasure in visiting him. According to the custom of his country, he presented them with coffee; and this beverage, however disgusting from its colour and bitterness, was well received, because it was offered by a foreigner, in beautiful china cups, on napkins ornamented with gold fringe. On leaving the ambassador's parties, each of the guests, in the enthusiasm of novelty, cried up coffee, and took means to procure it. A few years after, (in 1672) one Paschal, an Armenian, first opened, at the *Foire St. Germain*, and, afterwards on the *Quai de l'École*, a shop similar to those which he had seen in the Levant, and called his new establishment *café*. Other Levantines followed his example; but, to fix the fickle Parisian, required a coffeeroom handsomely decorated. Procope acted on this plan, and his house was successively frequented by Voltaire, Piron, Fontenelle, and St. Foix.

As drinking, which was then in vogue, was pursued less on account of the pleasure which it afforded, than for the sake of society, the

French made no hesitation in deserting the tavern for the coffeehouse. But, in making this exchange, it has been remarked, by the observers of the day, that they have not only lost their taste for conviviality, but are become more reserved and insincere than their forefathers, whose hearts expanded by the free use of the generous juice of the grape; thus verifying the old maxim, *in vino veritas.*

No small attraction to a Parisian coffeehouse is a pretty female to preside in the bar, and in a few I have seen very handsome women; though this post is commonly assigned to the mistress or some confidential female relation. Beset as they are from morn to night by an endless variety of flatterers, the virtue of a Lucretia could scarcely resist such incessant temptation. In general, they are coquetish; but, without coquetry, would they be deemed qualified for their employment?

Before the revolution, I remember, in the *ci-devant Palais Royal*, a coffeehouse called *Le café mécanique.* The mechanical contrivance, whence it derived its name, was of the most simple nature. The tables stood on hollow cylinders, the tops of which, resembling a salver with its border, were level with the plane of the table, but connected with the kitchen underneath. In the bar sat a fine, showy lady, who

repeated your order to the attendants below, by means of a speaking-trumpet. Presently the superficial part of the salver descended through the cylinder, and reascending immediately, the article called for made its appearance. This *café méchanique* did not long remain in being, as it was not found to answer the expectation of the projector. But besides six or seven coffeehouses on the ground-floor of the *Palais du Tribunat*, there are also several subterraneous ones now open.

In one of these, near the *Théâtre Français*, is a little stage, on which farces, composed for the purpose, are represented *gratis*. In another, is an orchestra consisting entirely of performers belonging to the National Institution of the Blind. In a third, on the north side of the garden, are a set of musicians, both vocal and instrumental, who apparently never tire; for I am told they never cease to play and sing, except to retune their instruments. Here a female now and then entertains the company with a solo on the French-horn. To complete the sweet melody, a merry-andrew habited *à la sauvage*, "struts his hour" on a place about six feet in length, and performs a thousand ridiculous antics, at the same time flogging and beating alternately a large drum, the thunder-like sound of which is almost loud

enough to give every auditor's brain a momentary concussion.

A fourth subterraneous coffeehouse in the *Palais du Tribunat* is kept by a ventriloquist, and here many a party are amused by one of their number being repeatedly led into a mistake, in consequence of being ignorant of the faculty possessed by the master of the house. This man seems to have no small share of humour, and exercises it apparently much to his advantage. In three visits which I paid to his cellar, the crowd was so great that it was extremely difficult to approach the scene of action, so as to be able to enjoy the effect of his ludicrous deceptions.

A friend of mine, well acquainted with the proper time for visiting every place of public resort in Paris, conducted me to all these subterraneous coffeehouses on a Sunday evening, when they were so full that we had some difficulty to find room to stand, for to find a seat was quite impossible. Such a diversity of character I never before witnessed in the compass of so small a space. However, all was mirth and good-humour. I know not how they contrive to keep these places cool in summer; for, in the depth of winter, a more than genial warmth prevails in them, arising from the confined breath of such a concourse. On approach-

ing the stair-case, if the orchestra be silent, the entrance of these regions of harmony is announced by a heat which can be compared only to the true Sirocco blast such as you have experienced at Naples.

LETTER LI.

Paris, January 15, 1802.

As after one of those awful and violent convulsions of nature which rend the bosom of the earth, and overthrow the edifices standing on its surface, men gradually repair the mischief it has occasioned, so the French, on the ruins of the ancient colleges and universities, which fell in the shock of the revolution, have from time to time reared new seminaries of learning, and endeavoured to organize, on a more liberal and patriotic scale, institutions for

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The vast field which the organization of public instruction presents to the imagination has, as may be supposed, given birth to a great number of systems more or less practicable; but, hitherto, it should seem that political oscillations have imprinted on all the new institutions a character of

weakness which, if it did not absolutely threaten speedy ruin, announced at least that they would not be lasting. When the germs of discord prevailed, it was not likely that men's minds should be in that tranquil state necessary for the re-establishment of public seminaries, to lay the foundations of which, in a solid and durable manner, required the calm of peace and the forgetfulness of misfortune.

After the suppression of the colleges and universities existing under the monarchy, and to which the *Collège de France* in Paris is the sole exception, the National Convention, by a decree of the 24th of Nivôse, year III (14th of January 1795) established *Normal* Schools throughout the Republic. Professors and teachers were appointed to them; and it was intended that, in these nurseries, youth should be prepared for the higher schools, according to the new plan of instruction. However, in less than a year, these *Normal* Schools were shut up; and, by a law of the 3d of Brumaire, year IV (25th of October, 1796) Primary, Secondary, and Central Schools were ordered to be established in every department.

In the Primary Schools, reading, writing, and arithmetic formed the chief part of the instruction. Owing to various causes, the Secondary Schools, I understand, were never established.

In the Central Schools, the internal regulation was to be as follows.

The whole of the instruction was divided into three classes or sections. In the first, were taught drawing, natural history, and ancient and modern languages. In the second, mathematics, physics, and chymistry. In the third, universal grammar, the fine arts, history, and legislation. Into the first class the pupils were to be received at the age of twelve; into the second, at fourteen; and into the third, at sixteen. In each Central School was to be a public library, a botanic garden, and an apparatus of chymical and physical instruments. The professors were to be examined and chosen by a *Jury of Instruction*, and that choice confirmed by the administration of the department.

The government, in turning its attention to the present state of the public schools, and comparing them with the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Republic, has found that the Primary Schools have been greatly neglected, and that the Central Schools have not been of so much utility as was expected. Alarmed at the consequences likely to be produced by a state of things which leaves a great part of the present generation destitute of the first rudiments of knowledge, the government has felt that the reorganization of these schools is become an urgent duty, and

that it is impossible to delay longer to carry it into execution.

The *Special* Schools of Arts and Sciences are mostly confined to Paris. The other rich and populous cities of the Republic have undoubtedly a claim to similar institutions. There is at present no School of Jurisprudence, and but one of Medicine.

The celebrated Fourcroy* has been some time engaged in drawing up a plan for the improvement of public instruction. In seeking a new mode of teaching appropriate to the present state of knowledge and to the genius of the French nation, he has thought it necessary to depart from the beaten track. Enlightened by the past, he has rejected the ancient forms of the universities, whose philosophy and acquirements, for half a century past, called for reformation, and no longer kept pace with the progress of reason. In the Central Schools he saw institutions few in number, and too uniformly organized for departments varying in population, resources, and means. He has, nevertheless, taken what was good in each of these two systems successively adopted, and removed their abuses. Without losing sight of the success due to good masters

* Counsellor of State, now charged with the direction and superintendance of public instruction.

and skilful professors, he has, above all, thought of the means of insuring the success of the new schools by the competition of the scholars. He is of opinion that to found literary and scientific institutions on a solid basis, it is necessary to begin by attaching to them pupils, and filling the classes with students, in order not to run the risk of filling them with professors. Such is the object which FOURCROY wishes to attain, by creating a number of national pensions, so considerable that their funds, when distributed in the Lyceums, may be sufficient for their support.

Agreeably to these ideas, the following is said to be the outline of the new organization of public instruction. It is to be divided into four classes; viz. Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Lyceums, and Special Schools.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

A Primary School may belong to several *communes* at a time, according to the population and the locality of these *communes*.

The teachers are to be chosen by the mayors and municipal councils.

The under-prefects are to be specially charged with the organization of these schools, and give an account of their state, once a month, to the prefects.

Secondary Schools.

Every school established in the *communes* or kept by private individuals, in which are taught the Latin and French languages, the first principles of geography, history and mathematics, is to be considered as a Secondary School.

The government promises to encourage the establishment of Secondary Schools, and reward the good instruction that shall be given in them, either by granting a spot for keeping them, or by the distribution of gratuitous places in the Lyceums, to such of the pupils as shall have distinguished themselves most, and by gratifications to the fifty masters who shall have qualified most pupils for the Lyceums.

No Secondary School is to be established without the authority of the government. The Secondary Schools and private schools, whose instruction is found superior to that of the Primary Schools, are to be placed under the superintendance and particular inspection of the prefects.

Lyceums.

There is to be one Lyceum at least in the district of every tribunal of appeal.

Here are to be taught ancient languages, rhetoric, logic, morality, and the elements of

the mathematical and physical sciences. To these are to be added drawing, military exercises and the agreeable arts.

Instruction is to be given to the pupils placed here by the government, to those of the Secondary Schools admitted through competition, to those whose parents may put them here as boarders, and also to day-scholars.

In each Lyceum is to be a director, who is to have immediately under him a censor of studies, and an administrator who are all to, be nominated by the First Consul.

In the former institutions, which are to be replaced by these new ones, a vigilant eye was not constantly kept on the state of the schools themselves, nor on that of the studies pursued in them. According to the new plan, three inspectors-general, appointed by the First Consul, are to visit them carefully, and report to the government their situation, success, and defects. This new supervisorship is to be, as it were, the key-stone of the arch, and to keep all the parts connected.

The fourth and highest degree of public instruction is to be acquired in the

Special Schools.

This is the name to be applied to those of the upper schools, where are particularly taught,

and in the most profound manner, the useful sciences, jurisprudence, medicine, natural history, &c. But schools of this kind must not be confounded with the Schools for Engineers, Artillery, Bridges and Highways, Hydrography, &c. which, *special* as they are essentially, in proportion to the sciences particularly taught in them, are better described, however, by the name of *Schools for Public Services*, on account of the immediate utility derived from them by the government.

In addition to the *Special* Schools now in existence, which are to be kept up, new ones are to be established in the following proportion:

Ten Schools of Jurisprudence. These useful institutions, which have been abolished during the last ten years, are, by a new organization, to resume the importance that they had lost long before the revolution. The pupils are to be examined in a manner more certain for determining their capacity, and better calculated for securing the degree of confidence to be reposed in those men to whose knowledge and integrity individuals are sometimes forced to intrust their character and fortune.

Three new Schools of Medicine, in addition to the three at present in being. These also are to be newly organized in the most perfect manner.

The mathematical and physical sciences have made too great a progress in France, their appli-

cation to the useful arts, to the public service, and to the general prosperity, has been too direct, says FOURCROY, for it not to be necessary to diffuse the taste for them, and to open new asylums where the advantages resulting from them may be extended, and their progress promoted. There are therefore to be four new *Special* Schools of Natural History, Physics, and Chymistry, and also a *Special* School devoted to transcendent Mathematics.

The mechanical and chymical arts, so long taught in several universities in Germany under the name of *technology*, are to have two *Special* Schools, placed in the cities most rich in industry and manufactures. These schools, generally wished for, are intended to contribute to the national prosperity by the new methods which they will make known, the new instruments and processes which they will bring into use, the good models of machines which they will introduce, in a word, by every means that mechanics and chymistry can furnish to the arts.

A School of Public Economy, enlightened by Geography and History, is to be opened for those who may be desirous to investigate the principles of governments, and the art of ascertaining their respective interests. In this school it is proposed to unite such an assemblage of knowledge as has not yet existed in France.

To the three principal schools of the arts

dependent on design, which are at present open, is to be added a fourth, become necessary since those arts bring back to France the pure taste of the beautiful forms, of which Greece has left such perfect models.

In each of the observatories now in use is to be a professor of astronomy, and the art of navigation is expected to derive new succour from these schools, most of which are placed in the principal sea-ports. A knowledge of the heavens and the study of the movements of the celestial bodies, which every year receives very remarkable augmentations from the united efforts of the most renowned geometricians and the most indefatigable observers, may have a great influence on the progress of civilization. On which account the French government is extremely eager to promote the science of astronomy.

The language of neighbouring nations, with whom the French have such frequent intercourse, is to be taught in several Lyceums, as being a useful introduction to commerce.

The art of war, of which modern times have given such great examples and such brilliant lessons, is to have its *special* school, and this school, on the plan which it is intended to be established by receiving as soldiers youths from the Lyceums, will form for the French armies officers equally skilful in theory as in practice.

This new Military School must not be con-

founded with the old *école militaire*. Independently of its not being destined for a particular class, which no longer exists in this country, the mode of instruction to be introduced there will render it totally different from the establishment which bore the same name.

It is to be composed of five hundred pupils, forming a battalion, and who are to be accustomed to military duty and discipline; it is to have at least ten professors, charged to teach all the theoretical, practical, and administrative parts of the art of war, as well as the history of wars and of great captains.

Of the five hundred pupils of the Special Military School, two hundred are to be taken from among the national pupils of the Lyceums, in proportion to their number in each of those schools, and three hundred from among the boarders and day-scholars, according to the examination which they must undergo at the end of their studies. Every year one hundred of the former are to be admitted, and two hundred of the latter. They are to be maintained two years in the Special Military School, at the expense of the Republic. These two years are to be considered as part of their military service.

According to the report made of the behaviour and talents of the pupils of the Military School,

the government is to provide them with appointments in the army.

National Pupils.

There are to be maintained at the expense of the Republic six thousand four hundred pupils, as boarders in the Lyceums and Special Schools.

Out of these six thousand four hundred boarders, two thousand four hundred are to be chosen by the government from among the sons of officers and public functionaries of the judicial, administrative, or municipal order, who shall have served the Republic with fidelity, and for ten years only from among the children of citizens belonging to the departments united to France, although they have neither been military men nor public functionaries.

These two thousand four hundred pupils are to be at least nine years of age, and able to read and write.

The other four thousand are to be taken from double the number of pupils of the Secondary Schools, who, according to an examination where their talents are put in competition, are to be presented to the government.

The pupils, maintained in the Lyceums, are not to remain there more than six years at the expense of the nation. At the end of their

studies, they are to undergo an examination, after which a fifth of them are to be placed in the different Special Schools according to their disposition, in order to be maintained there from two to four years at the expense of the Republic.

The annual cost of all these establishments is estimated at near eight millions of francs, (*circa* £336,000 sterling) which exceeds by at least two millions the amount of the charges of the public instruction for the few preceding years; but this augmentation, which will only take place by degrees, and at soonest in eighteen months, appears trifling, compared to the advantages likely to result from the new system.

Whenever this plan is carried into execution, what hopes may not France conceive from the youth of the rising generation, who, chosen from among those inclined to study, will, in all probability, rise to every degree of fame! The surest pledge of the success of the measure seems to consist in the spirit of emulation which is to be maintained, not only among the pupils, but even among the professors in the different schools; for emulation, in the career of literature, arts and sciences, leads to fame, and never fails to turn to the benefit of society; whereas jealousy, in the road of ambi-

tion and fortune, produces nothing but hatred and discord.

> " Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
> " Is emulation in the learn'd and brave."

So much for the plan.* In your last letter, you desire that I will afford you some means of appreciating the essential difference between the old system of education pursued in France, and the basis on which public instruction is now on the point of being reorganised and established. You must be sensible that the comparison of the two modes, were I to enter deeply into the question, would far exceed the limits of a letter. But, though I have already extended this to a certain length, I can, in a few more lines, enable you to compare and judge, by informing you, from the best authority, what has been the spirit which has dictated the new organization.

There are very few men who know how to confine themselves within just bounds. Some yield to the mania of innovation, and imagine that they create only because they destroy and change. Others bend under the yoke of old habits. Some, solely because they have remained

* The new organization of public instruction was decreed by the government on the 11th of Floréal, year X.

strangers to the sciences, would wish that youth should be employed only in the study of languages and literature. Others who, no doubt, forget that every learned man, who aims at a solid reputation, ought to sacrifice to the Muses, before he penetrates into the sanctuary of science, would wish education to be confined to the study of the exact sciences, and that youth should be occupied on things, before they are acquainted with words.

For the sole reason that the old system of instruction bore too exclusively on the study of the learned languages, it was to be feared that the new one, through a contrary excess, would proscribe the Greek and Latin. The study of these two languages, as FOURCROY has observed to me, is not merely useful to those who wish to acquire a thorough knowledge of the French, which has borrowed from them no small number of words, but it is only from the perusal of the great writers of antiquity, on whom the best among the moderns have formed themselves, that we can imbibe the sentiment of the beautiful, the taste, and the rectitude of mind equally necessary, whether we feel ourselves attracted towards eloquence or poetry, or raise ourselves to the highest conceptions of the physical or mathematical sciences.

At no time can the instruction given to a youth be otherwise considered than as a preparatory mean, whose object is to anticipate his taste and disposition, and enable him to enter with more firmness into the career which he is intended to follow.

From an attentive perusal of the plan, of which I have traced you the leading features, you will be convinced that the study of the sciences will gain by the new system, without that of literature being in danger of losing. The number of professors is increased, and yet the period of education is not prolonged. A pupil will always be at liberty to apply himself more intensely to the branch to which he is impelled by his particular inclination. He may confine himself to one course of lectures, or attend to several, according to his intellectual means. He will not be compelled to stop in his career, merely because the pupils of his class do not advance. In short, neither limits nor check have been put to the progress that may be made by talent.

I here give you only a principal idea, but the application of it, improved by your sagacity and knowledge, will be sufficient to answer all the objections which may be started against the new plan of instruction, and which, when care-

fully investigated, may be reduced to a single one; namely, that literature is sacrificed to the sciences.

LETTER LII.

Paris, January 18, 1802.

Of all the private lodgings in Paris, none certainly can be more convenient for the residence of a single man than those of

MILLINERS.

I have already said that such is the profession of my landlady. Whenever I am disposed for a little lively chitchat, I have only to step to the next door but one into her *magazin de modes*, where, like a favourite courtier, under the old *régime*, I have both *les grandes et les petites entrées*, or, in plain English, I may either introduce myself by the public front entrance, or slip in by the private back-door.

Here, twenty damsels are employed in making up head-dresses which are hourly produced and varied by fashion. Closely confined to the counter, with a needle in their hand, they are continually throwing their eyes towards the street. Not a passenger escapes their notice. The place

the nearest to the window is in the greatest request, as being most favourable for catching the transient homages of the crowds of men continually passing and repassing. It is generally occupied by the beauty of the *magazin* or warehouse; for it would be resented as an almost unpardonable offence to term this emporium of taste a *boutique* or shop.

Before each of them is a block, on which they form and adjust the gallant trophy destined to heighten the loveliness of some ambitious fair who has set her heart on surpassing all her rivals at an approaching ball. Montesquieu observes, in his Persian letters, that "if a lady has taken it into "her head to appear at an assembly in a parti-"cular dress, from that moment fifty persons "of the working class must no longer sleep, or "have time to eat and drink. She commands, "and is obeyed more expeditiously than the "king of Persia, because interest has greater "sway than the most powerful monarch on "earth."

In the morning, some of these damsels wait on the ladies with bandboxes of millinery. Obliged by their profession to adorn the heads of other women, they must stifle the secret jealousy of their sex, and contribute to set off the person of those who not unfrequently treat them with hauteur. However, they are now and then

amply revenged: sometimes the proud rich lady is eclipsed by the humble little milliner. The unadorned beauty of the latter destroys the made up charms of the coquette: 'tis the triumph of nature over art.

If, perchance, the lover drops in, fatal consequences ensue. His belle cannot but lose by the comparison: her complexion appears still more artificial beside the natural bloom of the youthful *marchande*. In a word, the silent admirer all at once becomes faithless.

Many a young Parisian milliner has made a jump from behind the counter into a fashionable carriage, even into that of an English peer. Strange revolution of fortune! In the course of a few days, she returns to the same shop to make purchases, holding high her head, and exulting in her success. Her former mistress, sacrificing her rage to her interest, assumes a forced complaisance; while her once-dear companions are ready to burst with envy.

Millinery here constitutes a very extensive branch of trade. Nothing short of the creative genius of the French could contrive to give, again and again, a new form to things the most common. In vain do females of other countries attempt to vie with them; in articles of tasteful fancy they still remain unrivaled.

From Paris, these studious mistresses of in-

vention give laws to the polished world. After passing to London, Berlin, Hamburg, and Vienna, their models of fashion are disseminated all over Europe. These models alike travel to the banks of the Neva and the shores of the Propontis. At Constantinople, they find their way into the seraglio of the Grand Signior; while, at Petersburg, they are servilely copied to grace the Empress of Russia. Thus, the fold given to a piece of muslin or velvet, the form impressed on a ribband, by the hand of an ingenious French milliner, is repeated among all nations.

A fashion here does not last a week, before it is succeeded by another novelty; for a French woman of *bon ton*, instead of wearing what is commonly worn by others, always aims at appearing in something new. It is unfortunately too true, that the changeableness of taste and inconstancy of fashion in France furnish an aliment to the luxury of other countries; but the principle of this communication is in the luxury of this gay and volatile people.

You reproach me with being silent respecting the *bals masqués* or masquerades, mentioned in my enumeration of the amusements of Paris. The fact is that a description of them will scarcely furnish matter for a few lines, still less a subject for a letter. However, in com-

pliance with custom, I have been more than once to the

BAL DE L'OPÉRA.

This is a masquerade frequently given in the winter, at the theatre of the grand French opera, where the pit is covered over, as that is of our opera-house in the Haymarket. From the powerful draught of air, which, coming from behind the scenes, may well be termed *vent de coulisse*, the room is as cold as the season.

Since the revolution, masquerades were strictly forbidden, and this prohibition continued under the directorial government. It is only since BONAPARTE'S accession to the post of Chief Magistrate, that the Parisians have been indulged with the liberty of wearing disguises during the carnival.

Of all the amusements in Paris, I have ever thought this the most tiresome and insipid. But it is the same at the *Bal de l'Opéra* as at *Frascati*, *Longchamp*, and other points of attraction here; every one is soon tired of them, and yet every one flocks thither. In fact, what can well be more tiresome than a place where you find persons masked, without wit or humour? Though, according to the old French saying, "*Il faut avoir bien peu d'esprit pour ne pas en avoir sous le masque?*

The men, who at a masquerade here generally go unmasked, think it not worth while to be even complaisant to the women, who are elbowed, squeezed, and carried by the tide from one end of the room to the other, before they are well aware of it. Dominos are the general dress. The music is excellent; but it is not the fashion to dance; and *les femmes de bonne compagnie,* that is, well-bred women, are condemned to content themselves with the dust they inhale; for they dare not quit their mask to take any refreshment. But, notwithstanding these inconveniences, it is here reckoned a fine thing to have been at a *bal masqué* when the crowd was great, and the pressure violent; as the more the ladies have shared in it, the more they congratulate themselves on the occasion.

Before the revolution, the *grand ton* was for gentlemen to go to the *Bal de l'Opéra* in a full-dress suit of black, and unmasked. Swords were here prohibited, as at Bath. This etiquette of dress, however, rendered not the company more select.

I remember well that at a masked ball at the Parisian opera, in the year 1785, the very first beau I recognized in the room, parading in a *habit de cour,* was my own *perruquier.* As at present, the amusement of the women then consisted in teazing the men; and those who had a

disposition for intrigue, gave full scope to the impulse of their nature. The *fille entretenue*, the *duchesse*, and the *bourgeoise*, disguised under a similar domino, were not always distinguishable; and I have heard of a certain French marquis, who was here laid under heavy contribution for the momentary gratification of his caprice, though the object of it proved to be no other than his own *cara sposa*.

LETTER LIII.

Paris, January 19, 1802.

When you expressed your impatience to be informed of the dramatic amusements in Paris, I promised to satisfy you as soon as I was able; for I knew that you would not be contented with a superficial examination. Therefore, in reviewing the principal scenic establishments, I shall, as I have done before, exert my endeavours not only to make you acquainted with the *best* performers in every department, but also with the *best* stock-pieces, in order that, by casting your eye on the *Affiches des Spectacles*, when you visit this capital, you may at once form a judgment of the quality and quantity of the entertainment you are likely to enjoy at

the representation of a particular piece, in which certain performers make their appearance. Since the revolution, the custom of printing the names of the actors and dancers in each piece, has been introduced. Formerly, amateurs often paid their money only to experience a disappointment; for, instead of seeing the hero or heroine that excited their curiosity, they had a bad duplicate, or, as the French term it, a *double*, imposed on them, more frequently through caprice than any other motive. This is now obviated; and, except in cases of sudden and unforeseen indisposition, you may be certain of seeing the best performers whenever their name is announced.

In speaking of the theatres, the pieces represented, and the merits of the performers, I cannot be supposed to be actuated by any prejudice or partiality whatever. I have, it is true, been favoured with the oral criticism of a man of taste, who, as a very old acquaintance, has generally accompanied me to the different *spectacles*; but still I have never adopted his sentiments, unless the truth of them had been confirmed by my own observation. From him I have been favoured with a communication of such circumstances respecting them as occurred during the revolution, when I was absent from Paris. You may therefore confidently rely on the candour and impartiality of my general sketch of the

theatres; and if the stage be considered as a mirror which reflects the public mind, you will thence be enabled to appreciate the taste of the Parisians. Without forgetting that

"*La critique est aisée, mais l'art est difficile,*"

I shall indulge the hope that you will be persuaded that truth alone has guided my pen in this attempt to trace the attractions of the

THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE.

The house, now occupied by the performers of this theatre, was built at the beginning of the revolution by the late duke of Orleans, who, according to the opinion of those best acquainted with his schemes of profit, intended it for the representation of the grand French opera, for which, nevertheless, it is not sufficiently spacious.

It stands adjoining to the south-west angle of the *Palais du Tribunat*, with its front entrance in the *Rue de la Loi*. Its façade presents a row of twelve Doric columns, surmounted by as many Corinthian pilasters, crowned by their entablature. On the first story is an exterior gallery, ornamented by an iron balustrade, which runs the whole length of the façade, and communicates with the lobby. On the north side, and at the back of the theatre, on the ground-floor, are se-

veral covered galleries, bordered by shops, which communicate with the *Rue St. Honoré* and the *Palais du Tribunat.*

The vestibule, where four stair-cases terminate, is of an elliptic form, surrounded by three rows of Doric pillars. Above the vestibule, which is on the ground-floor, are the pit and lobby. The inside of the house, which is immoderately lofty, presents seven tiers of boxes, and, in the circumference, six Corinthian pillars. The ornaments, numerously scattered, are in relief. At a certain elevation, the plan of the house is changed by a recess made facing the stage. Two angels, above the stage-boxes, shock the eye by their enormous size. The boxes to the number of two hundred and twenty-two, are said to contain thirteen hundred persons; and the pit, including the *orchestre**, seven hundred and twenty-four, making in all two thousand and twenty persons. The construction of this house is remarkable for iron only being employed in lieu of wood. The architect was Louis.

This theatre, which was begun in 1787, was finished in 1790, when, all privileges having been done away, it was first opened by a company of

* This is a place, so called in French theatres, comprising four or five rows of benches, parted off, between the place where the musicians are seated and the front of the pit.

French comedians, who played tragedy and comedy. It then took the name of *Théâtre Français de la Rue de Richelieu*, which street was afterwards and is now called *Rue de la Loi*. Being opened at the commencement of the revolution, it naturally adopted its principles; and, when the National Convention had proclaimed the Republic, it assumed the pompous name of *Théâtre de la République*. The greater part of the actors who performed here, rendered themselves remarkable for their *revolutionary* ardour, and, during the reign of terror, it became a privileged theatre.

The *Comédie Française* in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, which, in its interior, presented the handsomest playhouse in Paris, was called *l'Odéon* a few years ago, and, since then, has been reduced by fire to a mere shell, the walls only being left standing. In 1789, this theatre appeared to follow the torrent of the revolution, and changed its name for that of *Théâtre de la Nation*. Nevertheless, the actors did not, on that account, relinquish the title of *Comédiens ordinaires du Roi*. Shortly after, they even became, in general, the declared partisans of the old *régime*, or at least of the court. Their house was frequently an *arena* where the two parties came to blows, particularly on the occasion of the tragedy of *Charles Neuf*, by CHÉNIER, and of the co-

medy of *L'Ami des Loix*. The former of these pieces, represented in the first ebullition of the revolution, was directed against the court; and the comedians refused to bring it on the stage, at the time of the assemblage of the national guards in Paris, on the 14th of July, 1790, known by the title of *Federation*. The latter was played after the massacres of September 1792, and had been composed with the laudable view of bringing back the public mind to sentiments of humanity, justice, and moderation. The maxims which it contained, being diametrically opposite to those of the plunderers who then reigned, that is, the members of the *commune* of Paris, the minority of the National Convention, the Jacobins, Cordeliers, &c. they interrupted the representation, and, after a great uproar, the piece was prohibited.

This minority of which I have just spoken, having succeeded in subduing the majority, nothing now stopped the rage of the revolutionary party. All those who gave them umbrage were imprisoned, and put to death with the forms of law. The comedians of the French theatre were thrown into prison; it appears that they were, both men and women, partly destined for the scaffold, and that if they escaped, it was through the address of a clerk of one of the Committees of Public Welfare or of Public

Safety, who repeatedly concealed the documents containing the charges brought against them. It is said that the comedians purpose to prove their gratitude, so long delayed, to this young man, without putting themselves to any expense, by giving for his benefit an extraordinary representation*.

At length the happy 9th of Thermidor arrived; the prisons were thrown open; and, as you may well imagine in such a nation as this, the French comedians were not the last to be set at liberty. However, their theatre was not immediately restored to them. It was occupied by a sort of bastard *spectacle*, with the actors of which they were then obliged to form an association. This did not last long. The French comedians were received by the manager of the lyric theatre of the *Rue Feydeau*, whom they afterwards ruined. The actors of comedy, properly so called, contrived to expel those of tragedy, with whom they thought they could dispense; and, shortly, they themselves, notwithstanding their reputation, were deserted by the public. The heroes and heroines, with Mademoiselle Raucourt at their head, took possession of the theatre of the *Rue*

* It is not mentioned whether these sons and daughters of Thespis, who have since gained a great deal of money, have offered any *private* remuneration to their benefactor, or rather to their guardian-angel.

de Louvois, and there prospered. But, after the 18th of Fructidor, (5th of September, 1797) the Directory caused this house to be shut up: the reason assigned was the representation given here of a little comedy, of ancient date however, and of no great importance, in which a knavish valet is called MERLIN, as was the Minister of Justice of that day, who since became director, not of the theatre, but of the republic. Mademoiselle RAUCOURT, who was directress of this theatre, returned with her company to the old theatre of the *Faubourg St. Germain*, which then took the name of *l'Odéon*.

In the mean time, the theatre of the *Rue de Richelieu* had perceptibly declined, after the fall of Robespierre, and the public appeared to have come to a positive determination to frequent it no longer. The manager of the *Théâtre Feydeau*, M. SARGENT, formerly a banker, who was rich, and enjoyed a good reputation, succeeded in uniting all the actors of the *Comédie Française* and those of the *Théâtre de la République*. This effected his own ruin. When he had relinquished the management of the undertaking, the government took it in hand, and definitively organized this tragic and comic association, to superintend which it appointed a special commissioner.

The *repertoire* (or list of pieces which are here played habitually, or have been acted with applause) is amazingly well furnished, and does infinite honour to French literature. It may be divided into two parts, the ancient and the modern. It is the former that deserves the encomium which I have just bestowed. In the line of Tragedy, it is composed of the greater part of the pieces of the four principal pillars of the temple of the French Melpomene: namely CORNEILLE*, RACINE, CRÉBILLON, and VOLTAIRE, to whom may be added DU BELLOY, as well as of some detached pieces, such as *Iphigénie en Tauride* by GUIMOND DE LA TOUCHE, *Le Comte de Warwick* and *Philoctète* by LA HARPE. The modern *repertoire*, or list of stock-pieces, is formed of the tragedies of M. M. DUCIS, CHÉNIER, ARNAULT, LEGOUVÉ, and LE MERCIER.

In the line of Comedy, it is also very rich. You know that, at the head of the French comic authors, stands MOLIÈRE, who, in this country at least, has no equal, either among the ancients or the moderns. Several of his

* Of course, PIERRE CORNEILLE is here meant. THOMAS CORNEILLE, who was surnamed the Great, must not, however be forgotten. THOMAS is the author of *Ariane* and *le Comte d'Esser*, a tragedy much esteemed, and which is deserving of estimation.

pieces are still represented, though they are not numerously attended, as well because manners are changed, as because the actors are no longer able to perform them. Next to MOLIÈRE, but at a great interval, comes REGNARD, whom the French comedians have deserted, for much the same reason: they no longer give any plays from the pen of this author, who possessed the *vis comica*, except *Les Folies Amoureuses*, a pretty little comedy in three acts. We no longer hear of his *Joueur* and his *Légataire Universel*, which are *chefs d'œuvre*. There are likewise the works of DESTOUCHES, who has written *Le Glorieux*, *Le Dissipateur*, and *La Fausse Agnès*, which are always played with applause. *Le Méchant*, by GRESSET, is a masterpiece in point of style, and *La Métromanie*, by PIRON, the best of French comedies, next to those of MOLIÈRE and REGNARD. Then come the works of LA CHAUSSÉE, who is the father of the *drame*, and whose pieces are no longer represented, though he has composed several, such as *La Gouvernante*, *L'École des Mères*, *Le Préjugé à la Mode*, which, notwithstanding their whining style, are not destitute of merit, and those of DANCOURT, who has written several little comedies, of a very lively cast, which are still played, and those of MARIVAUX, whose old metaphysical jargon still pleases

such persons as have their head full of love. I might augment this list by the name of several other old authors, whose productions have more or less merit.

The number of modern French comic authors is very limited; for it is not even worth while to speak of a few little comedies in one act, the title of which the public scarcely remember. According to this calculation, there is but one single comic author now living. That is COLIN D'HARLEVILLE, who has written *L'Inconstant*, *Les Châteaux en Espagne*, *Le Vieux Célibataire*, and *Les Mœurs du Jour*, which are still represented. *Le Vieux Célibataire* is always received with much applause. In general, the pieces of M. COLIN are cold, but his style is frequently graceful: he writes in verse; and the whole part of *L'Inconstant* is very agreeably written. Indeed, that piece is the best of of this author.

FABRE D'EGLANTINE is celebrated as an actor in the revolution (I mean on the political stage), and as the author who has produced the best piece that has appeared since *La Métromanie*. It is the *Philinte de Molière*, which, in some measure, forms a sequel to the comedy of the *Misanthrope*. Nevertheless, this title is ill-chosen; for the character of the *Philinte* in the

piece of MOLIÈRE, and that of FABRE's piece scarcely bear any resemblance. We might rather call it the *Égoiste*. Although the comic part of it is weak, the piece is strongly conceived, the fable very well managed, the style nervous but harsh, and the third act is a *chef-d'œuvre*.

Since the death of FABRE, another piece of his has been acted, entitled *Le Précepteur*. In this piece are to be recognized both his manner and his affected philosophical opinions. His object is to vaunt the excellence of the education recommended by J. J. ROUSSEAU, though the revolution has, in a great measure, proved the fallacy of the principles which it inculcates. As these, however, are presented with art, the piece had some success, and still maintains its ground on the stage. It was played for the first time about two years ago. The surname of EGLANTINE, which FABRE assumed, arose from his having won the prize at the Floral games at Toulouse. The prize consisted of an *eglantine* or wild rose in gold. Before he became a dramatic author, he was an actor and a very bad actor. Being nominated member of the National Convention, he distinguished himself in that assembly, not by oratorical talents, but by a great deal of vil-

lainy. He did not think as he acted or spoke. When the *montagnards** or mountaineers, that is, those monsters who were always thirsting for blood, divided, he appeared for some time to belong to the party of DANTON, who, however, denied him when they were both in presence of each other at the bar of the revolutionary tribunal. DANTON insisted that he who had been brought to trial for a just cause, if not a just motive, ought not to be confounded with stealers of port-folios.† They were both sentenced to die, and accordingly executed.

Among the comic authors of our age, some people would reckon DUMOUSTIER, whose person was held in esteem, but whose works are below mediocrity. They are *Le Conciliateur*, a comedy in five acts, and *Les Femmes*, a comedy in three acts. The latter appears to be the picture of a brothel. They are both still played, and both have much vogue, which announces the total decline of the art.

There is a third species of dramatic com-

* Thus called, because they formed a very close and very elevated group at one of the extremities of the hall of the National Convention.

† FABRE D'EGLANTINE was tried for having, in concert with certain stock-jobbers, proposed and caused the adoption of decrees concerning the finances.

position, proscribed by the rules of good taste, and which is neither tragedy nor comedy, but participates of both. It is here termed *drame*. Although La Chaussée is the father of this tragi-comic species of writing, he had not, however, written any *tragédies bourgeoises*, and the French declare that we have communicated to them this contagion; for their first *drame*, *Beverley, ou le Joueur Anglais* is a translation in verse from the piece of that name of our theatre. The celebrated Lekain* opposed its being acted, and affirmed with reason that this mixture of the two species of drama hurt them both. Molé, who was fond of applause easily obtained, was the protector of the piece, and played the part of *Beverley* with success; but this *drame* is no longer performed on the Parisian stage. Next to this, comes *Le Père de Famille*, by Diderot. It is a long sermon. However, it presents characters well drawn. This species of composition is so easy that the number of *dramas* is considerable; but scarcely any of them are now performed, except *Eugénie* and *La Mère Coupable*, by Beaumarchais,§ which are

* Lekain said humourously that to play the *drame* well, it was sufficient to know how to make a summerset.

§ Every one is acquainted with the two comedies written by this author, *Le Barbier de Seville* and *Le Mariage de Figaro*. The astonishing run of the latter, which was acted one hundred

frequently represented. I shall not finish this article without reminding you that MERCIER has written so many *drames* that he has been called *Le Dramaturge*. All his are become the prey of the little theatres and the aliment of the provincial departments. This circumstance alone would suffice to prove the mediocrity of the *drame*. MONVEL, of whom I shall soon have occasion to speak, would well deserve the same title.

LETTER LIV.

Paris, January 20, 1802.

LET us now examine the merits of the principal performers belonging to the *Théâtre Français*.

TRAGEDY.

Noble Fathers, or characters of Kings.

VANHOVE, MONVEL, ST. PRIX, and NAUDET.

VANHOVE. This king of the *Théâtre Français* neither has majesty nor nobleness of manner.

and fifty succeeding nights, was greatly owing to BEAUMARCHAIS having there turned into ridicule several persons of note in the ministry and the parliament: *La Mère Coupable*, which is often given, is the sequel to *Le Mariage de Figaro*, as that piece is to *Le Barbier de Seville*.

His countenance is mean, and his make common. His monotonous and heavy utterance is sometimes intermingled with yelping sounds. He possesses no sensibility, and substitutes noise for expression. His mediocrity caused him to be received at the old *Comédie Française*; for the first or principal actors of that theatre were rather fond of receiving persons of weak talents, merely that they might be set off. He *doubled* BRIZARD, whom nature had endowed with the happiest gifts for tragedy.

VANHOVE was the first player ever called for by a Parisian audience after the representation, in order to express to him their satisfaction. However, it may be proper to observe that, in such cases, it is always some friend of the author who takes the lead. VANHOVE no longer obtains this favour at present, and is seldom applauded. He also plays the parts of fathers in comedy.

MONVEL. This actor is not near so old as VANHOVE; but the decay of his person is such that, when he plays, he seems a skeleton bestirring itself, or that is set in motion. It is a misfortune for him that his physical means betray his talents. MONVEL is a man of genius. Thus gifted, it is not astonishing that he has a just diction, and is not deficient in intelligence. Some persons doubt whether he has real sensibility; but

he at least presents the appearance of it. He, in some measure, breaks his voice, and vents mournful accents which produce much effect. With a constitution extremely weak, it is impossible that he should perform characters which require energy and pride. He therefore confines himself to those in which the pathetic is predominant, or which do not imperiously demand great efforts, such as *Auguste* in *Cinna*, *Burrhus* in *Britannicus*, *Brutus* in the tragedy of that name (now no longer played), *Lusignan* in *Zaïre*, *Zopire* in *Mahomet*, *Fenelon** and *l'Abbé de l'Epée* in the two pieces of that name. His stock of characters then is by no means extensive. We may also add to it the part of *Ésope à la cour*, in the comedy of that name by Boursault, which he plays or recites in great perfection, because it is composed of fables only. Monvel delivers them with neatness and simplicity. For this part he has no equal in France.†

Monvel is author as well as actor. He has composed several comic operas and *drames*; and his pieces, without being good, have always obtained great applause. His *drames* are *l'Amant*

* *Fénélon* is no longer performed. It is a very bad tragedy by *Chénier*.

† There are players members of the National Institute. Monvel belongs to the Class of Literature and the Fine Arts.

Bourru, Clémentine et Désormes, Les Amours de Bayard, Les Victimes Cloitrées, &c. You will find in them forced situations, but set off by sentiment. He is lavish of stage-effect and that always pleases the multitude. *L'Amant Bourru* has alone remained as a stock-piece.

By his zeal for the revolution, he alienated from him a great part of the public. When every principle of religion was trodden under foot, and, under the name of festivals of reason or of the goddess of reason, orgies of the most scandalous nature were celebrated in the churches, MONVEL ascended the pulpit of the parish of St. Roch, and preached *atheism* before an immense congregation. Shortly after, Robespierre caused the National Convention to proclaim the following declaration: "*The French people ac-*" *knowledge the Supreme Being and the immor-*" *tality of the soul.*" MONVEL trembled; and it is probable that, had not that sanguinary tyrant been overthrown, the atheistical preacher would have descended from the pulpit only to ascend the scaffold.*

ST. PRIX. He has no fixed employment. Sometimes he plays the parts of kings, some-

* Notwithstanding the ill effects likely to result from such doctrine, far more dangerous to society than the poniards of a host of assassins, it appears that, when those actors called terrorists, or partisans of terror, were hunted down, MONVEL was not molested.

times those of lovers; but excels in none. He would be a very handsome man, were it possible to be so with a face void of expression. Nature has given him a strong but hollow voice; and he recites so coldly, that he makes the public yawn, and seems sometimes to yawn himself. When he means to display warmth, he screams and fatigues the ear without mercy.

NAUDET. This man, who is great only in stature, quitted the rank of serjeant in the *Gardes Françaises* to become a bad player. In the character of kings, he scarcely now appears but to personate tyrants. He is very cold, and speaks through his nose like a Capuchin friar, which has gained him the appellation of the Reverend Father NAUDET.

First parts or principal lovers, in Tragedy.

TALMA, and LAFOND.

TALMA. The great reputation which circumstances and his friends* have given to this actor has, probably, rendered him celebrated in England. His stature and his voice (which, in theatrical language, is called *organ*), should seem to qualify him for the parts of *jeunes premiers* only, of which I shall say more hereafter. Ac-

† There are a great many enthusiastic admirers of his talent.

cordingly he made his *début* in that line about fifteen or sixteen years ago. Without being brilliant, his first appearances were successful, and he was received on trial. He soon caused himself to be remarked by the correctness of his dress.* But what fixed attention on TALMA, was the part of *Charles Neuf*, which he plays in the tragedy of that name.† In the riots to which this piece gave rise in 1790, TALMA figured as a patriot. Having fallen out with the comedians who had behaved ill to him, and no longer placed him in any other parts than those of confidants, he was engaged at the new *Théâtre Français* of the *Rue de Richelieu*, where it was proposed to him to perform the characters which pleased him best, that is, the best in each piece. Thus he was seen alternately personating young princes, heroes, and tyrants.

TALMA is now reduced to those of the old stock. The characters he at present represents

* It is really to TALMA that the French are indebted for the exact truth of costume which is at this day to be admired on the theatres of Paris, especially in new pieces. An inhabitant of a country the most remote might believe himself in his native land; and were an ancient Greek or Roman to come to life again, he might imagine that the fashion of his day had experienced no alteration.

† The subject of it is the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day.

are *Cinna* in the tragedy of that name by CORNEILLE, *Oreste* in the *Andromaque* of RACINE, *Néron* in the *Britannicus* of the same, *Œdipe* in the tragedy of that name by VOLTAIRE, and *Faïel* in *Gabrielle du Vergy* by DU BELLOY, *Oreste* in *Iphigénie en Tauride* by GUIMOND DE LA TOUCHE, and *Ægisthe* in the *Agamemnon* of LE MERCIER. TALMA also plays many other parts, but, in these, he makes no great figure. He had a great aversion to old pieces, and as long as he preserved his sway at the theatre, very few, if any were performed. In fact, there are many in which he is below mediocrity.

You will certainly expect that I should tell you what constitutes the talent of this performer. He is small in stature, thin in person, and rather ill-made; his arms and legs being bowed, which he takes care to conceal by the fulness of his garments. He has a fine eye, and his features are regular, but too delicate for the perspective of the theatre. He has long since adopted the antique head-dress,* and has contributed to bring it into fashion. He distinguished himself formerly in Paris by wearing clothes of a strange form. As an actor, he has no nobleness of manner, and not unfrequently his gestures are aukward. His deport-

* He wears his hair cut short, and without powder.

ment is always ungraceful, though he often endeavours to imitate the posture of the antique statues; but even then he presents only a caricature. His countenance has little or no expression, except in moments of rage or terror. In pourtraying the latter sentiment, all the faculties of his soul appear absorbed; yet, though his distraction seems complete, there is a sort of silliness blended with his stupor, which certain persons take for truth, and which is much more perceptible in the rest of his characters. In rage, he is a tiger mangling his prey, and sometimes you might believe that you heard that animal drawing his breath. TALMA has never expressed well a tender, generous, or noble sentiment. His soul is neither to be softened nor elevated; and, to produce effect, he must be in a terror or in a rage; but then he makes a great impression on the majority of the public. His utterance is slow, minced, and split into syllables. His voice is hollow; but, in moments of rage, it is strong, yet without being of a considerable volume. He is generally reproached with being deficient in sensibility: I think, however, that, by dint of labour, he might paint feeling; for I have heard him render delicate passages happily enough. He is accused here of having adopted the English style of acting, though, as far as my opinion goes, with little or no foundation. Be

this as it may, he passed the early part of his youth in London, where his father resides, and follows the profession of a dentist. The son may now be about thirty-eight years of age.

TALMA preserves the reputation of being a zealous partisan of the revolution; but I am confidently assured that he never injured any one, and held in horror the assassinations which have left an indelible stain on that event. He was intimately connected with the deputies, styled *Girondists* or *Brisotins*, who perished on the scaffold, after their party was overcome, on the 31st of May, 1793, by that of the ferocious mountaineers. The latter warmly reproached TALMA with having, in the year 1792, after the retreat of the Prussians, given a *fête* or grand supper to the famous DUMOURIEZ, with whom they were beginning to fall out, and whom they accused of treason for not having taken the king of Prussia prisoner. The hideous MARAT, I am told, went to call on that general at TALMA'S, where the company received him very cavalierly, and when he was gone, DUGAZON the actor, hot-headed revolutionist as he was, by way of pleasantry, pretended to purify the room by burning sugar in a chaffing-dish. All this amounted to more than was necessary for being condemned by the revolutionary tribunal; and TALMA, being detested by

Robespierre, would, in all probability, have been delivered over to that tribunal, but for the protection of David, the celebrated painter, who was concerting with him about changing the form of dress of the French people. During all the reign of terror, Talma and his wife were in continual fear of the scaffold.

Lafond. Talma reigned, and was in possession of the first cast of parts. Of these, he played whatever suited him, and rejected what he disliked, when about a year ago, there appeared in the same line a young actor of a rather tall and well-proportioned stature, and whom Nature had, besides, gifted with an agreeable countenance and a tolerably good voice. He had played in the provincial theatres; but, in order to overcome every obstacle which might be opposed to his *début*, he became a pupil of Dugazon, an actor of comedy, and what is more singular, of one more frequently a buffoon than a comedian. The latter, however, is said to possess a knowledge of the style of playing of the actors who, thirty years ago, graced the French stage, and consequently may be capable of giving good advice.

By means of this powerful protection, Lafond got the better of every difficulty. This actor made his first appearance in the character of *Achille* in the tragedy of *Iphigénie en*

Aulide by RACINE. He was not the Achilles of Homer, nor even that of the piece, or at best he represented him in miniature. However, his diction generally just, his acting, some grace, and, above all, the fatigue and *ennui* which TALMA impressed on many of the spectators, procured this rival a decisive success. As is customary in such cases, the newspapers were divided in opinion. The majority declared for LAFOND, and none of the opposite side spoke unfavourably of him. It was not so with TALMA. Some judged him harshly, calling him a *detestable* actor, while others bestowed on him the epithet of *sublime*, which, at the present day, has scarcely any signification; so much is it lavished on the most indifferent performers. This instance proves the fact; for if TALMA has reached the sublime, it is *le sublime de la Halle*.

These two rivals might live in peace; the parts which suit the one, being absolutely unfit for the talents of the other. TALMA requires only concentered rage, sentiments of hatred and vengeance, which certainly belong to tragedy, but which ought not to be expressed as if they came from the mouth of a low fellow, unworthy of figuring in an action of this kind; and LAFOND is little qualified for any other than graceful parts, bordering on knight-errantry.

or romance. His best character is *Achille*. I have also seen him perform, if not in a manner truly tragic, at least highly satisfactory, *Rodrigue* in *Le Cid* of CORNEILLE, and the part of *Tancrède* in VOLTAIRE's tragedy of that name. LAFOND obtains the preference over TALMA in the character of *Orosmane* in the tragedy of *Zaïre*; a character which is the touchstone of an actor. Not that he excels in it. He has not a marked countenance, the dignity, the tone of authority, the energy, and the extreme sensibility which characterize this part. He is not the Sultan who commands. He is, if you please, a young *commis* very amorous, a little jealous, who gets angry, and becomes good-humoured again; but at least he is not a ferocious being, as TALMA represents *Orosmane*, in moments of rage and passion, or an unfeeling one in those which require sensibility.

LAFOND is reproached sometimes with a bombastic and inflated tone. Feeling that he is deficient in the necessary powers, he swells his voice, which is prejudicial to truth, and without truth, there is no theatrical illusion. Nature had intended him for the parts of young lovers, of which I shall presently speak. His features are too delicate, his countenance not sufficiently flexible, and his person bespeaks too little of the hero, for great characters. But

when he first appeared, there was a vacancy in this cast of parts, and none in the other.

Jeunes Premiers, *or parts of young Lovers.*

ST. FAL, DAMAS, and DUPONT.

ST. FAL. This performer, who is upwards of forty-five, has never had an exterior sufficiently striking to turn the brain of young princesses. Every thing in his person is common, and his acting is really grotesque. However, not long since he frequently obtained applause by a great affectation of sensibility and a stage-trick, which consists in uttering loud, harsh, and hoarse sounds after others faint and scarcely articulated. He has, besides, but a trivial or burlesque delivery, and no dignity, no grace in his deportment or gestures.

DAMAS. He is much younger than ST. FAL, but his gait and carriage are vulgar. He is not deficient in warmth; but all this is spoiled by a manner the most common. He first played at the theatres on the *Boulevard*, and will never be able to forget the lessons he imbibed in that school. It is with him as with the rabbits of which BOILEAU makes mention, in one of his Satires where he describes a bad dinner,

" ——————*et qui, nés dans Paris,*

" *Sentaient encore le chou dont ils furent nourris.*"

The *drame* is the style in which DAMAS best

succeeds. There is one in particular, *Le Lovelace Français*, where he personates an upholsterer of the *Rue St. Antoine*, who has just been cornuted by the young Duke of Richelieu. This part he performs with much truth, and *avec rondeur*, as the critics here express it, to signify plain-dealing. But DAMAS is no less ignoble in comedy than in tragedy.

DUPONT. This young actor, who is of a very delicate constitution, has never had what we call great powers on the stage; and a complaint in his tongue has occasioned a great difficulty in his articulation. Without having a noble air, he has something distinguishing in his manner. His delivery is correct; but the defect of which I have spoken has rendered him disagreeable to the public, who manifest it to him rather rudely, though he has sometimes snatched from them great applause.

After all the actors I have mentioned, come the confidants, a dull and stupid set, of whom one only deserves mention, not as an actor, but as an author. This is DUVAL. He has written that pretty comic opera, entitled *Le Prisonnier*, as well as *Maison à vendre*, and several *drames*, among which we must not forget *Le Lovelace Français, ou la Jeunesse du Duc de Richelieu*, the piece before-mentioned.

January 20, *in continuation.*

Next follow the daughters of Melpomene, or those heroines who make the most conspicuous figure in Tragedy.

Characters of Queens.

Mesdames RAUCOURT and VESTRIS.

Mademoiselle RAUCOURT. Never did *début* make more noise than that of this actress, who appeared for the first time on the French stage about thirty years ago, and might then be sixteen or seventeen years of age. She was a pupil of Mademoiselle CLAIRON, who had a numerous party, composed of Encyclopædists, French academicians, and almost all the literati of Paris. The zeal of her friends, the youth, tall stature, and person of the *débutante* supplied the place of talent; and her instructress has recorded in her memoirs that all her labour was lost. The success, however, of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT was such, that there were, it is said, several persons squeezed to death at the door of the playhouse. What increased enthusiasm in favour of the young actress was, that a reputation for virtue was granted to her as great and as justly merited as that for talent. Her father declared in the public lobby, that he would blow out her brains,

if he suspected her of having the smallest intrigue. He kept not his word. Besides, it is well known that his daughter always took care to conduct herself in such a manner as to set the foresight even of jealousy at defiance. Her *penchant* not leaving her the resource to which women of her profession generally recur, and her expenses being considerable, her debts increased; and to avoid the pursuit of her creditors she took refuge in Germany with her tender friend, Mademoiselle Souk, who has since been mistress to the late king of Prussia. They both travelled over that country, and a thousand reports are circulated to their shame; but the most disgraceful of these are said to be unfounded. The protection of the queen of France, who paid her debts repeatedly, at length restored her to the *Comédie Française*. Such inconsiderate conduct did no small injury to that unfortunate princess, whom I mention with concern on such an occasion.

The stature of Mademoiselle Raucourt is colossal, and when she presents herself, she has a very imposing look. Her face, however, is not so noble; she has small eyes, and her features have not that flexibility necessary for expressing the movements of the passions. Her voice was formerly very full in the *medium* or level-speaking; but it seemed like that of a man. When you heard

it for the first time, you thought that, in impassioned sentences, she was going to thunder; but, on the contrary, she assumed a very extensive *falsetto*, which formed the most singular contrast with the dull sounds that had preceded it. That defect, perhaps, is somewhat less striking at the present day; but the voice of this actress is become hoarse, like that of persons who make a frequent use of strong liquors. The delivery of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT is, in general, just and correct; for she is allowed to have understanding; yet, as she neither has warmth nor sensibility, she produces scarcely any effect. Plaudits most frequently burst forth when she appears; but, though these are obtained, she never touches the feelings of the spectator, she never reaches his heart, even in the parts, where she has had the most vogue. That of *Médée*, in which she has begun to re-establish her declining reputation, was neither better felt nor better expressed. She was indebted for the success she obtained in it only to the magician's robe, to the wand, and to a stage-trick which consists in stooping and then raising herself to the utmost height at the moment when she apostrophizes the sun. In the scene of Medea with her children, a heart-rending and terrible scene, there was nothing but dryness and a total absence of every maternal feeling.

The characters of queens, which Mademoiselle Raucourt performs, are the first cast of parts at the theatre. It consists of those of mothers and a few parts of enraged or impassioned lovers. In the works of Corneille, the principal ones are *Cléopatre* in *Rodogune*, and *Cornélie* in the *Mort de Pompée*. In Racine's, the parts of *Athalie* and of *Phèdre* in the tragedies of the same name, of *Agrippine* in *Britannicus*, of *Clitemnestre* in *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and of *Roxane* in *Bajazet*. In Voltaire's, those of *Mérope* and *Sémiramis*; and, lastly, that of *Médée* in the tragedy by Longepierre.

Like all the performers belonging to the *Théâtre Français*, Mademoiselle Raucourt was imprisoned during the reign of terror. The patriots of that day bore her much ill-will, and it is asserted that Robespierre had a strong desire to send her to the guillotine. When she reappeared on the stage, the public compensated her sufferings, and to this circumstance she owes the rather equivocal reputation she has since enjoyed.

Madame Vestris. Although she has been a very long time on the Parisian stage, this actress is celebrated only from the famous quarrel she had twenty years ago with Mademoiselle Sainval the elder. Through the powerful protection of the Marshal de Duras*, her lover, she prevailed

* One evening at the opera, M. de Duras authoritatively

over her formidable rival, who, however, had on her side the public, and the sublimity of her talent. This quarrel arose from Madame Vestris wishing to wrest from Mademoiselle Sainval the parts for which she was engaged. A memoir, written by an indiscreet friend, in favour of the latter, which she scorned to disavow, and in which the court was not spared, caused her to be banished from the capital by a *lettre de cachet*. The public, informed of her exile, called loudly for Mademoiselle Sainval. No attention was paid to this by the higher powers, and the guard at the theatre was tripled, in order to insure to Madame Vestris the possibility of performing her part. Nevertheless, whenever she made her appearance, the public lavished on her hisses, groans, and imprecations. All this she braved with an effrontery, which occasioned them to be redoubled. But, as all commotions subside in time, Madame Vestris remained mistress of the stage; while Mademoiselle Sainval travelled over the provinces, where the injustice of the court towards her caused no less regret than the superiority of her talent excited admiration.

took possession of a box hired for the night by another person. The latter, dreading his power, but at the same time desirous to stigmatize him, said: "'Tis not he who took Minorca, 'tis "not he who took this place nor that, the man of whom I "complain, never took any thing in his life but my box at "the opera!"

Madame Vestris was rather handsome, and this explains the whole mystery. She had, above all, a most beautiful arm, and paid no small attention to her toilet. She delivers her parts with tolerable correctness, but her tone is heavy and common. The little warmth with which she animates her characters, is the production of an effort; for she neither possesses energy nor feeling. Her gestures correspond with her acting, and she has no dignity in her deportment. She seldom appears on the stage at present, which saves her from the mortification of being hissed. She is now old, and the political opinion of those who frequent most the theatres rouses them against her.

Although the court had really committed itself to favour her, Madame Vestris was the first to betray her noble patrons. At the period of the revolution, she quitted the old *Comédie Française*, taking with her Dugazon, her father, and Talma, and founded the present theatre, styled *Théâtre de la République*. She was also followed by several authors; for not being able to conceal from herself the mediocrity of her talents, especially in such parts of the old plays as had been performed by other actresses in a manner far superior, she facilitated the representation of new pieces, in which she had not to fear any humiliating comparison. The principal of these

authors were La Harpe, Ducis, and Chénier. The last, who, besides, is famous as member of the National Convention and other Legislative Assemblies, composed the tragedy of *Charles Neuf*, in which Madame Vestris, playing the part of *Catherine de Médicis*, affected, I am told, to advance her under-lip, *à l'Autrichienne*, in order to occasion comparisons injurious to the ill-fated Marie-Antoinette*.

Characters of Princesses.

Mesdames Fleury, Talma, Bourgoin, and Volnais.

Mademoiselle Fleury. She has no longer youth nor beauty, and her talents as an actress are much on a par with her personal attractions. She recites with judgment, but almost always with languor, and betrays a want of warmth. Besides, her powers have declined. However, she sometimes displays energetic flashes of a real tragic truth; but they are borrowed, and it is affirmed, not without foundation, that Mademoiselle Sainval the elder (who is still living) has been so obliging as to lend them to her.

Madame Talma. For this name she is indebted to a divorce, having snatched Talma from

* All the princes and princesses of the House of Austria have the under-lip very prominent.

his first wife, an elderly woman who had ruined herself for him, or whom he had ruined. She quitted her first husband, a dancing-master of the name of PETIT, to live under the more than friendly protection of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT. ——————Madame TALMA is not handsome, and is now on the wane. She plays tragedy, comedy, and the *drame*; but has no real talent, except in the last-mentioned line. In the first, she wants nobleness and energy. Her delivery is monotonous. It is said in her praise, that she has "*tears in her voice.*" I believe that it seldom happens to her to have any in her eyes, and that this sensibility, for which some would give her credit, proceeds not from her heart. In comedy, she wishes to assume a cavalier and bold manner, brought into vogue by Mademoiselle CONTAT. This manner by no means suits Madame TALMA, who neither has elegance in her shape, nor animation in her features. In the *drame*, her defects disappear, and her good qualities remain. She then is really interesting, and her efforts to please are rewarded by the applause of the public.

Mademoiselle BOURGOIN. . With respect to this young lady, a powerful protection serves her in lieu of talent; for she is handsome. She persists in playing tragedy, which is not her fort. In comedy, she appears to advantage.

Mademoiselle Volnais. This is a very young girl. All she says is in a crying tone, and what is worse, she seems not to comprehend what she says. In the characters which she first represented she was very successful, but is no longer so at the present day.

Characters of Confidantes.

Mesdames Suin and Thénard.

There are two only who are deserving of notice. The one is Madame Suin, who certainly justifies the character she bears of a woman of judgment; for she has the most just delivery of all the performers belonging to the *Théâtre Français*; but she is advanced in years, and the public often treat her with rudeness. The other confidante is Mademoiselle Thénard, who has played the parts of princesses at this theatre with a partial success.

There are also other confidantes, whom it is not worth while to mention.

I shall conclude this account of the tragedians belonging to the *Théâtre Français*, by observing that the revolution is said to have given a new turn to the mind and character of the French women; and the success which several actresses at this day obtain in the dramatic career, in the line of tragedy, is quoted in support of this opinion. For a number of years past, as has been seen, Mel-

pomene seemed to have placed the diadem on the head of Mademoiselle RAUCOURT, and this tragic queen would probably have grown gray under the garments of royalty, had not the revolution imparted to her sex a degree of energy sufficient for them to dispute her empire. Women here have seen so many instances of cruelty, during the last ten or twelve years, they have participated, in a manner more or less direct, in an order of things so replete with tragical events, that those among them who feel a *penchant* for the stage, find themselves, in consequence, disposed to figure in tragedy*.

* The example of Mesdemoiselles BOURGOIN and VOLNAIS having proved that first-rate talents were not necessary for being received at the *Théâtre Français*, as a tragic queen or princess, the number of candidates rapidly increased. For several months past, the merit of these *débutantes* has been the general concern of all Paris. Each had her instructor, and, of course, was carefully tutored for the occasion.

M. LEGOUVÉ, the tragic writer, first brought forward on this stage Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS, a girl about twenty, extremely ill-favoured by nature. DUGAZON, the actor, next introduced Madame XAVIER, a very handsome and elegant woman. Lastly, Mademoiselle RAUCOURT presented her pupil, Mademoiselle GEORGES WEIMER, a young girl of perfect beauty. Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS played *Phèdre*, in RACINE'S tragedy of that name, seven successive times. She certainly displayed a semblance of sensibility, and, notwithstanding the disadvantages of her person, produced such an effect on the senses of the debauched Parisian youth by the

LETTER LVI.

Paris, January 22, 1802.

THE observation with which I concluded my last letter, might explain why the votaries of Thalia gain so little augmentation to their num-

libidinous manner she adopted in the scene where *Phèdre* declares her unconquerable passion for her son-in-law *Hippolyte*, that her success was complete. What greater proof can be adduced of the vitiated taste of the male part of the audience? She also performed *Sémiramis, Didon,* and *Hermione;* but in the first two characters she betrayed her deficiency. The next who entered the lists was Madame XAVIER. On her *début* in *Sémiramis,* she was favourably received by the public; but, afterwards, choosing to act *Hermione,* the partisans of Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS assembled in such numbers as to constitute a decided majority in the theatre. Not content with interrupting Madame XAVIER, and hissing her off the stage, they waited for her at the door of the play-house, and loaded her with the grossest abuse and imprecations. Lastly appeared Mademoiselle GEORGES WEIMER. Warned by the disgraceful conduct of the *Duchesnistes* (as they are called) towards Madame XAVIER, the comedians, by issuing a great number of *orders*, contrived to anticipate them, and obtain a majority, especially in the pit. Mademoiselle GEORGES made her *début* in the character of *Clitemnestre,* and was well received. Her beauty excited enthusiasm, and effected a wonderful change in public opinion. After playing several parts in which Mademoiselle DUCHESNOIS had either failed, or was afraid to appear, she at last ventured to rival her in

ber; while those of Melpomene are daily increasing. I shall now proceed to investigate the merits of the former, at the *Théâtre Français*.

COMEDY.

Parts of noble Fathers.

VANHOVE and NAUDET.

VANHOVE. This actor is rather more sufferable in comedy than tragedy; but in both he is very monotonous, and justifies the lines applied to him by a modern satirist, M. DESPAZE:

> " VANHOVE, *plus heureux, psalmodie à mon gré*;
> " *Quel succès l'attendait, s'il eût été Curé!*"

that of *Phèdre*. At the first representation of the piece, Mademoiselle GEORGES obtained only a partial success; but, at the second, she was more fortunate. The consequence, however, had well nigh proved truly tragic. The *Duchesnistes* and *Georgistes* had each taken their posts, the one on the right side of the pit; the other, on the left. When Mademoiselle GEORGES was called for after the performance, and came forward, in order to be applauded, the former party hissed her, when the latter falling on them, a general battle ensued. The guard was introduced to separate the combatants; but the *Duchesnistes* were routed; and, being the aggressors, several of them were conducted to prison. The First Consul assisted at this representation; yet his presence had no effect whatever in restraining the violence of these dramatic factions.

Since then, Mesdemoiselles DUCHESNOIS and GEORGES have both been received into the company of the *Théâtre Français*. Madame XAVIER has returned to the provinces.

NAUDET. I have already said that the Reverend Father NAUDET, as he is called, played the parts of tyrants in tragedy. Never did tyrant appear so inoffensive. As well as VANHOVE, in comedy, he neither meets with censure nor applause from the public.

First parts, or principal lovers, in Comedy.

MOLÉ, FLEURY, and BAPTISTE the elder.

MOLÉ. At this name I breathe. Perhaps you have imagined that ill-humour or caprice had till now guided my pen; but, could I praise the talent of MOLÉ as he deserves, you would renounce that opinion.

MOLÉ made his *début* at the *Comédie Française* about forty-five years ago. He had some success; but as the Parisian public did not then become enthusiasts in favour of mere beginners, he was sent into the provinces to acquire practice. At the expiration of two or three years, he returned, and was received to play the parts of young lovers in tragedy and comedy. He had not all the nobleness requisite for the first-mentioned line of acting; but he had warmth and an exquisite sensibility. In a word, he maintained his ground by the side of Mademoiselle DUMESNIL and LEKAIN, two of the greatest tragedians that ever adorned the French stage. For a long time he was famous in the parts of *petits-*

maîtres, in which he shone by his vivacity, levity, and grace.

This actor was ambitious in his profession. Although applauded, and perhaps more so than LEKAIN, he was perfectly sensible that he produced not such great, such terrible effects; and he favoured the introduction of the *drame*, which is a mixture of tragedy and comedy. But those who most detest the whining style of this species of composition are compelled to acknowledge that MOLÉ was fascinating in the part of *St. Albin*, in DIDEROT'S *Père de Famille*.

BELLECOURT being dead, MOLÉ took the first parts in comedy, with the exception of a few of those in which his predecessor excelled, whose greatest merit, I understand, was an air noble and imposing in the highest degree. As this was MOLÉ'S greatest deficiency, he endeavoured to make amends for it by some perfection. He had no occasion to have recourse to art. It was sufficient for him to employ well the gifts lavished on him by nature. Though now verging on seventy, no one expresses love with more eloquence (for sounds too have theirs), or with more charm and fire than MOLÉ. In the fourth act of the *Misanthrope*, he ravishes and subdues the audience, when, after having overwhelmed *Célimène* with reproaches, he paints to her the love with which he is inflamed. But this sen-

timent is not the only one in the expression of which MOLÉ is pre-eminently successful.

In the *Philinte de Molière*, which also bears the title of *La Suite du Misanthrope*, and in which FABRE D'EGLANTINE has presented the contrast between an egotist and a man who sacrifices his interest to that of his fellow-creatures, MOLÉ vents all the indignation of virtue with a warmth, a truth, and even a nobleness which at this day belong only to himself. In short, he performs this part, in which the word *love* is not once mentioned, with a perfection that he maintains from the first line to the last.

In the fifth act of *Le Dissipateur* (a comedy by DESTOUCHES), when he sees himself forsaken by his companions of pleasure, and thinks he is so by his mistress too, the expression of his grief is so natural, that you imagine you see the tears trickling from his eyes. In moments when he pictures love, his voice, which at times is somewhat harsh, is softened, lowers its key, and (if I may so express myself) goes in search of his heart, in order to draw from it greater flexibility and feeling. The effect which he produces is irresistible and universal. Throughout the house the most profound silence is rigidly, but sympathetically enforced; so great is the apprehension of losing a single monosyllable in these interesting moments, which always appear

too short. To this silence suceeed shouts of acclamation and bursts of applause. I never knew any performer eommand the like but Mademoiselle SAINVAL the elder.

In no character which MOLÉ performs, does he ever fail to deserve applause; but there is one, above all, which has infinitely added to his reputation. It is that of the *Vieux Célibataire* in the comedy of the same name by COLIN D'HARLEVILLE, which he personates with a good humoured frankness, an air of indolence and apathy, and at the same time a grace that will drive to despair any one who shall venture to take up this part after him. On seeing him in it, one can scarcely believe that he is the same man who renders with sueh warmth and feeling the part of *Alceste* in the *Misanthrope*, and in the *Suite de Molière*; but MOLÉ, imbibing his talent from nature, is diversified like her.

Caressed by the women, assoeiating with the most amiable persons both of the court and the town, and, in short, idolized by the public, till the revolution, no performer led a more agreeable life than MOLÉ. However, he was not proscribed through it, and this was his fault. Not having been imprisoned like the other actors of the old *Comédie Française*, he had no share in their triumph on their reappearance, and it even required all his talent to maintain his ground;

but, as it appears that no serious error could be laid to his charge, and as every thing is forgotten in the progress of events, he resumed part of his ascendency. I shall terminate this article or panegyric, call it which you please, by observing that whenever MOLÉ shall retire from the *Théâtre Français*, and his age precludes a contrary hope, the best stock-pieces can no longer be acted*.

FLEURY. A man can no more be a comedian in spite of Thalia than a poet in spite of Minerva. Of this FLEURY affords a proof. This actor is indebted to the revolution for the reputation he now enjoys; but what is singular, it is not for having shewn himself the friend of that great political convulsion. Nature has done little for him. His appearance is common; his countenance, stern; his voice, hoarse; and his delivery, embarrassed; so much so that he speaks only by splitting his syllables. A stammering lover! MOLÉ, it is true, sometimes indulged in a sort of stammer, but it was suited to the moment, and not when he had to express the ardour of love. A lover, such as is represented to us in all French comedies, is a being highly favoured by

* It must grieve every admirer of worth and talent to hear that MOLÉ is now no more. Not long since he paid the debt of nature. As an actor, it is more than probable that "we ne'er shall look on his like again."

Nature, and FLEURY shews him only as much neglected by her. A great deal of assurance and a habit of the stage, a warmth which proceeds from the head only, and a sort of art to disguise his defects, with him supply the place of talent. Although naturally very heavy, he strives to appear light and airy in the parts of *petits-maîtres*, and his great means of success consist in turning round on his heel. He was calculated for playing *grims* (which I shall soon explain), and he proves this truth in the little comedy of *Les Deux Pages*, taken from the life of the king of Prussia, the great Frederic, of whose caricature he is the living model. He wished to play capital parts, the parts of MOLÉ, and he completely failed. He ventured to appear in the *Inconstant*, in which MOLÉ is captivating, and it was only to his disgrace. Being compelled to relinquish this absurd pretension, he now confines himself to new or secondary parts, in the former of which he has to dread no humiliating comparison, and the latter are not worthy to be mentioned.

Friends within and without the theatre, and the spirit of party, have, however, brought FLEURY into fashion. He will, doubtless, preserve his vogue; for, in Paris, when a man has once got a name, he may dispense with talent:

"*Des réputations; on ne sait pourquoi!*"

says GRESSET, the poet, in his comedy of *Le Méchant*, speaking of those which are acquired in the capital of France.

BAPTISTE the elder. But for the revolution, he too would, in all probability, never have figured on the *Théâtre Français*. When all privileges were abolished, a theatre was opened in the *Rue Culture St. Catherine* in Paris, and BAPTISTE was sent for from Rouen to perform the first parts. In *Robert Chef des Brigands* and *La Mère Coupable*, two *drames*, the one almost as full of improbabilities as the other, he had great success; but in *Le Glorieux* he acquired a reputation almost as gigantic as his stature, and as brilliant as his coat covered with spangles. This was the part in which BELLECOURT excelled, and which had been respected even by MOLÉ. The latter at length appeared in it; but irony, which is the basis of this character, was not his talent: yet MOLÉ having seen the court, and knowing in what manner noblemen conducted themselves, BAPTISTE had an opportunity of correcting himself by him in the part of *Le Glorieux*.

The *Théâtre Français* being in want of a performer for such characters, BAPTISTE was called in. Figure to yourself the person of Don Quixote, and you will have an idea of that of this actor, whose countenance, however, is un-

meaning, and whose voice seems to issue from the mouth of a speaking-trumpet.

Jeunes premiers, *or young lovers, in Comedy.*
St. Fal, Dupont, Damas, and Armand.

One might assemble what is best in these four actors, without making one perfect *lover*. I have already spoken of the first three, who, in comedy, have nearly the same defects as in tragedy. As for the fourth, he is young; but unfortunately for him, he has no other recommendation.

Characters of Grims, *or* Rôles à manteau *.
Grandménil and Caumont.

Grandménil. This performer is, perhaps, the only one who has preserved what the French critics call *la tradition*, that is, a traditionary knowledge of the old school, or of the style in which players formerly acted, and especially in the time of Molière. This would be an advantage for him, but for a defect which it is not in his power to remedy; for what avails justness of diction when a speaker can no longer make himself heard? And this is the case with Grand-

* The word *Grim*, in French theatrical language, is probably derived from *grimace*, and the expression of *Rôles à manteau* arises from the personages which they represent being old men, who generally appear on the stage with a cloak.

MÉNIL. However, I would advise you to see him in the character of the *Avare* (in MOLIÈRE's comedy of that name) which suits him perfectly. By placing yourself near the stage, you might lose nothing of the truth and variety of his delivery, as well as of the play of his countenance, which is facilitated by his excessive meagreness, and to which his sharp black eyes give much vivacity.

GRANDMÉNIL is member of the National Institute.

CAUMONT. He possesses that in which his principal in this cast of parts is deficient, and little more. One continually sees the efforts he makes to be comic, which sufficiently announces that he is not naturally so. However, he has a sort of art, which consists in straining his acting a little without overcharging it.

Parts of Valets.

DUGAZON, DAZINCOURT, and LAROCHELLE.

DUGAZON. One may say much good and much ill of this actor, and yet be perfectly correct. He has no small share of warmth and comic humour. He plays sometimes as if by inspiration; but more frequently too he charges his parts immoderately. PRÉVILLE, who is no common authority, said of DUGAZON: "How well he can "play, if he is in the humour!" He is but sel-

dom in the humour, and when he is requested not to overcharge his parts, 'tis then that he charges them most. Not that he is a spoiled child of the public; for they even treat him sometimes with severity. True it is that he is reproached for his conduct during the storms of the revolution. Although advanced in years, he became Aide-de-camp to SANTERRE.———SANTERRE! An execrable name, and almost generally execrated! Is then a mixture of horror and ridicule one of the characteristics of the revolution? And must a painful remembrance come to interrupt a recital which ought to recall cheerful ideas only? In his quality of Aide-de-camp to the Commandant of the national guard of Paris, DUGAZON was directed to superintend the interment of the unfortunate Lewis XVI, and in order to consume in an instant the body of that prince, whose pensioner he had been, he caused it to be placed in a bed of quick lime. No doubt, DUGAZON did no more than execute the orders he received; but he was to blame in putting himself in a situation to receive them.

Not to return too abruptly to the tone which suits an article wherein I am speaking of actors playing comic parts, I shall relate a circumstance which had well nigh become tragic, in regard to DUGAZON, and which paints the temper of the time when it took place. Being an author as

well as an actor, DUGAZON had written a little comedy, entitled *Le Modéré*. It was his intention to depress the quality indicated by the title. However, he was thought to have treated his subject ill, and, after all, to have made his *modéré* an honest man. In consequence of this opinion, at the very moment when he was coming off the stage, after having personated that character in his piece, he was apprehended and taken to prison.

DAZINCOURT. In no respect can the same reproaches be addressed to him as to DUGAZON; but as to what concerns the art, it may be said that if DUGAZON goes beyond the mark, DAZINCOURT falls short of it. PRÉVILLE said of the latter as a comedian: "Leaving "pleasantry out of the question, DAZINCOURT "is well enough." Nothing can be added to the opinion of that great master.

LAROCHELLE. He has warmth, truth, and much comic humour; but is sometimes a little inclined to charge his parts. He has a good stage face. It appears that he can only perform parts not overlong, as his voice easily becomes hoarse. This is a misfortune both for himself and the public; for he really might make a good comedian.

There are a few secondary actors in the comic line, such as BAPTISTE the younger, who

performs in much too silly a manner his parts of simpletons, and one DUBLIN, who is the ostensible courier; not to speak of some others, whose parts are of little importance.

January 22, *in continuation.*

Principal female Characters, in Comedy.
Mesdemoiselles CONTAT, and MÉZERAY.—
Madame TALMA.

Mademoiselle CONTAT. This actress has really brought about a revolution in the theatre. Before her time, the essential requisites for the parts which she performs, were sensibility, decorum, nobleness, and dignity, even in diction, as well as in gestures, and deportment. Those qualities are not incompatible with the grace, the elegance of manners, and the playfulness also required by those characters, the principal object of which is to interest and please, which ought only to touch lightly on comic humour, and not be assimilated to that of chambermaids, as is done by Mademoiselle CONTAT. A great coquette, for instance, like *Célimène* in the *Misanthrope*, ought not to be represented as a girl of the town, nor *Madame de Clainville*, in the pretty little comedy of *La Gageure*, as a shopkeeper's wife.

The innovation made by Mademoiselle Contat was not passed over without remonstrance. Those strict judges, those conservators of rules, those arbiters of taste, in short, who had been long in the habit of frequenting the theatre, protested loudly against this new manner of playing the principal characters. "That is not "becoming!" exclaimed they incessantly: which signified "that is not the truth!" But what could the feeble remonstrances of the old against the warm applause of the young?

Mademoiselle Contat had a charming person, of which you may still be convinced. She was not then, as she is now, overloaded with *embonpoint*, and, though rather inclined to stoop, could avail herself of the advantages of an elevated stature. None of the resources of the toilet were neglected by her, and for a long time the most elegant women in Paris took the *ton* for dress from Mademoiselle Contat. Besides, she always had a delicacy of discrimination in her delivery, and a varied sprightliness in the *minutiæ* of her acting. Her voice, though sometimes rather shrill, is not deficient in agreeableness, but is easily modulated, except when it is necessary for her to express feeling. The inferiority of Mademoiselle Contat on this head is parti-

cularly remarkable when she plays with MOLÉ. In a very indifferent comedy, called *Le Jaloux sans amour*, at the conclusion of which the husband entreats his wife to pardon his faults, MOLÉ contrives to find accents so tender, so affecting; he envelops his voice, as it were, with sounds so soft, so mellow, and at the same time so delicate, that the audience, fearing to lose the most trifling intonation, dare not draw their breath. Mademoiselle CONTAT replies, and, although she has to express the same degree of feeling, the charm is broken.

Being aware that the want of nobleness and sensibility was a great obstacle to her success, this actress endeavoured to insure it by performing characters which require not those two qualities. The first she selected for her purpose was *Susanne* in the *Mariage de Figaro*. *Susanne* is an elegant and artful chambermaid; and Mademoiselle CONTAT possessed every requisite for representing well the part. She had resigned the principal character in the piece to Mademoiselle SAINVAL the younger, an actress who was celebrated in tragedy, but had never before appeared in comedy. On this occasion, I saw Mademoiselle SAINVAL play that ungracious part with a truth, a grace, a

nobleness, a dignity, a perfection in short, of which no idea had yet been entertained in Paris.

Another part in which Mademoiselle Contat also rendered herself famous, is that of *Madame Evrard*, in the *Vieux Célibataire*. —*Madame Evrard* is an imperious, cunning, and roguish housekeeper; and this actress has no difficulty in seizing the *ton* suitable to such a character. This could not be done by one habituated to a more noble manner. Mademoiselle Contat has not followed the impulse of Nature, who intended her for the characters of *soubrettes*; but, when she made her *début*, there were in that cast of parts three or four women not deficient in merit, and it would have taken her a long time to make her way through them.

The parts which Mademoiselle Contat plays at present with the greatest success are those in the pieces of Marivaux, which all bear a strong resemblance, and the nature of which she alters; for it is also one of her defects to change always the character drawn by the author. The reputation enjoyed by this actress is prodigious; and such a *critique* as the one I am now writing would raise in Paris a general clamour. Her defects, it is true, are less prominent at this day, when hereditary rank is

annihilated; and merit, more than manners, raises men to the highest stations. Besides, it is a presumption inherent in the Parisians to believe that they never can be mistaken. To reason with them on taste is useless; it is impossible to compel them to retract when they have once said "*Cela est charmant.*"

Before I take leave of Mademoiselle Contat, I shall observe that there exists in the *Théâtre Français* a little league, of which she is the head. Besides herself, it is composed of Mademoiselle Devienne, Dazincourt, and Fleury. I am confidently assured that the choice and reception of pieces, and the *début* of performers depend entirely on them. As none of them possess all the requisites for their several casts of parts, they take care to play no other than pieces of an equivocal kind, in which neither *bon ton*, nor *vis comica* is to be found. They avoid, above all, those of Molière and Regnard, and are extremely fond of the comedies of Marivaux, in which masters and lackies express themselves and act much alike. The unison is then perfect, and some people call this *de l'ensemble*, as if any could result from such a confusion of parts of an opposite nature. As for new pieces, the members of the league must have nothing but *papillotage* (as the French call it), interspersed with allusions to

their own talent, which the public never fail to applaud. When an author has inserted such compliments in his piece, he is sure of its being received, but not always of its being successful; for when the ground is bad, the tissue is good for nothing.

Mademoiselle Mézeray. She is of the school of Mademoiselle Contat, whence have issued only feeble pupils. But she is very pretty, and has the finest eyes imaginable. She plays the parts of young coquettes, in which her principal dares no longer appear. Without being vulgar in her manner, one cannot say that she has dignity. As for sensibility, she expresses it still less than Mademoiselle Contat. However, the absence of this sentiment is a defect which is said to be now common among the French. Indeed, if it be true that they are fickle, and this few will deny, the feeling they possess cannot be lasting.

Madame Talma. I have already spoken of her merits as a comic actress, when I mentioned her as a tragedian.

Parts of young Lovers.

Mesdemoiselles Mars, Bourgoin, and Gros.

Mademoiselle Mars. She delivers in an ingenuous manner innocent parts, and those of lovers. She has modest graces, an interesting

countenance, and appears exceedingly handsome on the stage. But she will never be a true actress.

Mademoiselle Bourgoin. She has some disposition for comedy, which she neglects, and has none for tragedy, in which she is ambitious to figure. I have already alluded to her beauty, which is that of a pretty *grisette*.

Mademoiselle Gros. She is the pupil of Dugazon, and made her *début* in tragedy. The newspaper-writers transformed her into Melpomene, yet so rapid was her decline, that presently she was scarcely more than a waiting woman to Thalia.

Characters, *or foolish Mothers.*

Mesdemoiselles Lachaissaigne and Thénard.

The latter of these titles explains the former. In fact, this cast of parts consists of *characters*, that is, foolish or crabbed old women, antiquated dowagers in love, &c. Commonly, these parts are taken up by actresses grown too old for playing *soubrettes*; but to perform them well, requires no trifling share of comic humour; for, in general, they are charged with it. At the present day, this department may be considered as vacant. Mademoiselle Lachaissaigne, who is at the head of it, is very old, and never had the requisites for per-

forming in it to advantage. Mademoiselle THÉNARD begins to *double* her in this line of acting, but in a manner neither more sprightly nor more captivating.

Parts of Soubrettes *or Chambermaids.*
Mesdemoiselles DEVIENNE and DESBROSSES.

Mademoiselle DEVIENNE. If Mademoiselle CONTAT changes the principal characters in comedy into those of chambermaids, Mademoiselle DEVIENNE does the contrary, and from the same motive, namely, because she is deficient in the requisites for her cast of parts, such as warmth, comic truth, and vivacity. Yet, while she assumes the airs of a fine lady, she takes care to dwell on the slightest *équivoque*; so that what would be no more than gay in the mouth of another woman, in hers becomes indecent. As she is a mannerist in her acting, some think it perfect, and they say too that she is charming. However, she must have been very handsome.

Mademoiselle DESBROSSES. The public say nothing of her, and I think this is all she can wish for.

I have now passed in review before you those who are charged to display to advantage

the dramatic riches bequeathed to the French nation by CORNEILLE, RACINE, MOLIÈRE, CRÉBILLON, VOLTAIRE, REGNARD, &c. &c. &c. If it be impossible to squander them, at least they may at present be considered as no more than a buried treasure. Although the *chefs d'œuvre* of those masters of the stage are still frequently represented, and the public even appear to see them with greater pleasure than new pieces, they no longer communicate that electric fire which inflames genius, and (if I may use the expression) renders it productive. A great man can, it is true, create every thing himself; but there are minds which require an impulse to be set in motion. Without a CORNEILLE, perhaps the French nation would not have had a RACINE.

Formerly, people went to the *Théâtre Français* in order to hear, as it were, a continual course of eloquence, elocution, and pronunciation. It even had the advantage over the pulpit and the bar, where vivacity of expression was prohibited or restricted. Many a sacred or profane orator came hither, either privately or publicly, to study the art by which great actors, at pleasure, worked on the feelings of the audience, and charmed their very soul. It was, above all, at the *Théâtre Français* that foreigners might have learned to pronounce

well the French language. The audience shuddered at the smallest fault of pronunciation committed by a performer, and a thousand voices instantly corrected him. At the present day, the comedians insist that it belongs to them alone to form rules on this point, and they now and then seem to vie with each other in despising those already established. The audience being perhaps too indulgent, they stand uncorrected.

Whether or not the *Théâtre Français* will recover its former fame, is a question which Time alone can determine. Undoubtedly, many persons of a true taste and an experienced ear have disappeared, and no one now seems inclined to say to the performers: "That is "the point which you must attain, and at "which you must stop, if you wish not to ap-"pear deficient, or to overact your part." But the fact is, they are without a good model, and the spectators, in general, are strangers to the *minutiæ* of dramatic excellence. In tragedy, indeed, I am inclined to think that there never existed at the *Théâtre Français* such a deficiency of superior talents. When LEKAIN rose into fame, there were not, I have been told, any male performers who went as far as himself, though several possessed separately the qualifications necessary for that line. However,

there was Mademoiselle DUMESNIL, a pupil of nature, from whom he might learn to express all the passions; while from Mademoiselle CLAIRON he might snatch all the secrets of art.

As for Comedy, it is almost in as desperate a situation. The *ton* of society and that of comedians may have a reciprocal influence, and the revolution having tended to degrade the performance of the latter, the consequences may recoil on the former. But here I must stop.—I shall only add that it is not to the revolution that the decline of the art, either in tragedy or comedy, is to be imputed. It is, I understand, owing to intrigue, which has, for a long time past, introduced pitiful performers on the stage of the *Théâtre Français*, and to a multiplicity of other causes which it would be too tedious to discuss, or even to mention. Notwithstanding the encomiums daily lavished on the performers by the venal pen of newspaper writers, the truth is well known here on this subject. Endeavours are made by the government to repair the mischief by forming pupils; but how are they to be formed without good masters or good models?

LETTER LVI.

Paris, January 24, 1802.

Among the customs introduced here since the revolution, that of women appearing in public in male attire is very prevalent. The more the Police endeavours to put a stop to this extravagant whim, the more some females seek excuses for persisting in it: the one makes a pretext of business which obliges her to travel frequently, and thinks she is authorized to wear men's clothes as being more convenient on a journey; another, of truly-elegant form, dresses herself in this manner, because she wishes to attract more notice by singularity, without reflecting that, in laying aside her proper garb, she loses those feminine graces, the all-seductive accompaniments of beauty. Formerly, indeed, nothing could tend more to disguise the real shape of a woman than the

COSTUME OF THE FRENCH LADIES.

A head-dress, rising upwards of half a yard in height, seemed to place her face near the middle of her body; her stomach was compressed into a stiff case of whalebone, which

checked respiration, and deprived her almost of the power of eating; while a pair of cumbersome hoops, placed on her hips, gave to her petticoats the amplitude of a small elliptical, inflated balloon. Under these strange accoutrements, it would, at first sight, almost have puzzled BUFFON himself to decide in what species such a female animal should be classed. However, this is no longer an enigma.

With the parade of a court, all etiquette of dress disappeared. Divested of their uncouth and unbecoming habiliments, the women presently adopted a style of toilet not only more advantageous to the display of their charms, but also more analogous to modern manners.

No sooner was France proclaimed a republic, than the annals of republican antiquity were ransacked for models of female attire: the Roman tunic and Greek *cothurnus* soon adorned the shoulders of the Parisian *élégantes*; and every antique statue or picture, relating to those periods of history, was, in some shape or another, rendered tributary to the ornament of their person.

This revolution in their dress has evidently tended to strengthen their constitution, and give them a pectoral *embonpoint*, very agreeable, no doubt, to the amateur of female proportion, but the too open exposure of which

cannot, in a moral point of view, be altogether approved. These treasures are, in consequence, now as plentiful as they were before uncommon. You can scarcely move a step in Paris without seeing something of this kind to exercise your admiration. Many of those domains of love, which, under the old-fashioned dress, would have been considered as a flat country, now present, through a transparent crape, the perfect rotundity of two sweetly-rising hillocks. As prisoners, wan and disfigured by confinement, recover their health and fulness on being restored to liberty, so has the bosom of the Parisian belles, released from the busk and corset, experienced a salutary expansion.

In a political light, this must afford no small satisfaction to him who takes an interest in the physical improvement of the human species, as it tends to qualify them better for that maternal office, dictated by Nature, and which, in this country, has too long and too frequently been intrusted to the uncertain discharge of a mercenary hireling. Another advantage too arises from the established fashion. Thanks to the ease of their dress, the French ladies can now satisfy all the capacity of their appetite. Nothing prevents the stomach from performing its functions; nothing paralyzes the

spring of that essential organ. Nor, indeed, can they be reproached with fastidiousness on that score. From the soup to the desert, they are not one moment idle: they eat of every thing on the table, and drink in due proportion. Not that I would by any means insinuate that they drink more than is necessary or proper. On the contrary, no women on earth are more temperate, in this respect, than the French; they, for the most part, mix water even with their weakest wine; but they also swallow two or three glasses of *vin de dessert*, without making an affected grimace, and what is better, they eat at this rate without any ill consequence. Now, a good appetite and good digestion must strengthen health, and, in general, tend to produce pectoral *embonpoint*.

In this capital, you no longer find among the fair sex those over-delicate constitutions, whose artificial existence could be maintained only by salts, essenses, and distilled waters. Charms as fresh as those of Hebe, beauties which might rival the feminine softness of those of Venus, while they bespeak the vigour of Diana, and the bloom of Hygëia, are the advantages which distinguish many of the Parisian belles of the present day, and for which they are, in a great measure, indebted to the freedom they enjoy under the antique costume.

In no part of the world, perhaps, do women pay a more rigid attention to cleanliness in their person than in Paris. The frequent use of the tepid bath, and of every thing tending to preserve the beauty of their fine forms, employ their constant solicitude. So much care is not thrown away. No where, I believe, are women now to be seen more uniformly healthy, no where do they possess more the art of assisting nature; no where, in a word, are they better skilled in concealing and repairing the ravages of Time, not so much by the use of cosmetics, as by the tasteful manner in which they vary the decoration of their person.

LETTER LVII.

Paris, January 25, 1802.

I HAVE already observed that the general effervescence to which the revolution gave birth, soon extended to the seminaries of learning. The alarm-bell resounded even in the most silent of those retreats. Bands of insurgents, intermixed with women, children, and men of every condition, came each moment to interrupt the studies, and, forcing the students to

range themselves under their filthy banner, presented to them the spectacle of every excess. It required not all this violence to disorganize institutions already become antiquated,* and few of which any longer enjoyed much consideration in the public opinion. The colleges and universities were deserted, and their exercises ceased. Not long after, they were suppressed. The only establishment of this description which has survived the storms of the

* Whatever sentiment may have been preserved respecting the ancient University of Paris, every impartial person must acknowledge that it was several centuries in arrear in regard to every thing which concerns the Arts and Sciences. Peripatetic, when the learned had, with Descartes, renounced the philosophy of Aristotle, it became Cartesian, when they were Newtonians. Such is the too general custom of bodies, engaged in instruction, who make no discoveries. Invested at their formation with great influence over scientific opinions, because they are composed of the best informed men of the day, they wish constantly to preserve those advantages. They with reluctance suffer that there should be formed, elsewhere than in their own bosom, new opinions which might balance theirs; and if the progress of the sciences at last obliges them to abandon their doctrine, they never adopt the most modern theories, were they, in other respects, preferable; but embrace those which existed for some time anterior to them, and which they themselves had before combated. This inertness of bodies employed in instruction, is an unavoidable evil; because it is the effect of self-love, the most invariable of passions.

revolution, and which is no less important from its utility than extensive in its object, is the

COLLÈGE DE FRANCE.

It neither owed this exemption to its ancient celebrity, nor to the talents of its professors; but having no rich collections which could attract notice, no particular estates which could tempt cupidity, it was merely forgotten by the revolutionists, and their ignorance insured its preservation.

The *Collège de France* is, at the present day, in this country, and perhaps in the rest of Europe, the only establishment where every branch of human knowledge is taught in its fullest extent. The object of this institution is to spread the most elevated notions of the sciences, to maintain and pave the way to the progress of literature, either by preserving the taste and purity of the ancient authors, or by exhibiting the order, lustre, and richness of the modern. Its duty is to be continually at the head of all the establishments of public instruction, in order to guide them, lead them on, and, as it were, light them with the torch of knowledge.

This college, which is situated in the *Place de Cambray, Rue St. Jacques,* was founded by

Francis I. That monarch, distinguished from all cotemporaries by his genius, amiableness, and magnificence, saw in literature the source of the glory of princes, and of the civilization of the people. He loved and honoured it, not only in the writings of the learned, but in the learned themselves, whom he called about his person, at the same time loading them with encouragement and favours. It is singular that those times, so rude in many respects, were, nevertheless, productive of sentiments the most delicate and noble.

Truth never shuns princes who welcome it. Francis I was not suffered to remain ignorant of the deplorable state in which literature then was in France, and, though very young, he disdained not this information. Nothing, in fact, could approach nearer to barbarism. The impulse Charlemagne had given to study was checked. The torches he had lighted were on the point of being extinguished. That famous university which he had created had fallen into decline. A prey to all the cavils of pedantry, it substituted dispute and quibble to true philosophy.

Nothing was any longer talked of but the *five universals*, *substance*, and *accident*. All the fury of argument was manifested to know whether those were simple figures, or beings

really existing, all things equally useful to the revival of knowledge and the happiness of mankind. The Hebrew and Greek tongues were scarcely, if at all, known; the living languages, little cultivated; Latin itself, then almost common, was taught in the most rude and imperfect manner. In short, the most learned body of the State had fallen into the most profound ignorance: a striking example of the necessity of renewing continually and maintaining the life of those bodies employed in instruction.

I am not speaking of the sciences, then entirely unknown. The languages were every thing at this period, on account of their connexion with religion.

The small number of men of merit whom the bad taste of the age had not reached, were striving to restore to literature its lustre, and to men's minds their true direction; but, in order to revive the taste for good studies, it was necessary to create a new establishment for public instruction, which should be sufficiently extensive for acquiring a great influence. It was necessary to assemble men the most celebrated for their talent and reputation, in order that, being thus placed in full view, and presented to public attention, they might

rectify the minds of men by their authority, as well as enlighten them by their knowledge.

This undertaking, difficult in itself, became much less so through the circumstances which then existed. Taste seemed to have taken refuge at the court, and the king easily yielded to the reasons of the learned who approached him; but no one took a greater share in this project than the celebrated Erasmus. Remote from it as he was, he accelerated its execution by the disinterested praises which he lavished on it. The king sent to invite him, in the most flattering terms, to take the direction of it and to settle in France; but Erasmus, jealous of liberty, retained besides by the gratitude he owed to Charles V, and by the care he bestowed on the College of Louvain which he had founded, refused this task, equally honourable and useful. He manifested not the less, in his letters, the joy he felt to see studies re-established by the only means which could reanimate them. It is pleasing to the true friends of the sciences to find among those who cultivate them similar traits of generosity and nobleness.

At length peace having restored to France repose and the means of repairing her losses, the king gave himself up without reserve to

the desire he had of making the sciences flourish, and realized the grand project of public instruction which had for a long time occupied his mind. The new college took the name of *Collège Royal.* It had professors for the Hebrew and Greek tongues, and some even for the mathematics, philosophy, medicine, and the living languages.

The formation of the *Collège Royal* gave great displeasure to the University. After having held so long without a rival the sceptre of the sciences and literature, it was grating to its members to relinquish it. They could ill bear to see set above it an establishment evidently intended to direct and guide it. Self-love offended seldom forgives, especially when it is animated by the *esprit de corps.* The University depreciated the new college, and endeavoured to fetter it in a thousand ways. At last, those dark intrigues being constantly smothered by the applause which the professors received, the University finished by bringing them before a court of justice. From envy to persecution there is but one step, and that step was soon taken.

Religion served as a pretext and a cloak for this accusation. It was affirmed that the new professors could not, without danger to the faith, explain the Hebrew and Greek tongues,

if they had not been presented to the University to be examined by it, and received from it their mission. To this it was answered, that if the theologians of the University understood Greek and Hebrew, it must be easy for them to denounce the passages in which the new professors had erred, and that if, on the contrary, they did not understand those languages, they ought not to pretend to judge those who taught them. After long debates, things were left in the state in which they were before the trial. Each party continued quietly its lessons, and, as it almost always happens in such cases, reason ended by having its due weight: true it is that it was then supported by royal authority.

The *Collège de France* has not since ceased to make an increasing progress. It even had the valuable advantage of reforming itself successively, and of following new ideas, the necessary result of its constitution and of the lustre that has always surrounded it; two causes which have occasioned its chairs to be sought by the most celebrated men of every description. It is this successive reform which constitutes the distinctive character of the *Collège de France*, and which has always enabled it to fulfil its real object.

Thus, to quote but one example. The

chair of Greek philosophy was, in the beginning, intended to make known the writings of the ancient philosophers on the nature of things and the organization of the universe. These were, at that time, the only repositories of human knowledge for mathematics and physics; but, in proportion as the sciences, more advanced, substituted rational theories for hazardous conjectures, the modern discoveries of astronomy were taught, together with the writings of the ancients. The object of this chair, which at the present day bears the name of general physics and mathematics, is to disseminate the most elevated notions of mechanics and the theory of the system of the world. The works taught by its occupier are analytical mechanics and celestial mechanics, that is, those works which form the limits of our knowledge for mathematical analysis, and consequently those of which it is most important to increase the very small number of readers.

By a consequence of that spirit of amelioration which animates this College, some time before the revolution, a chair and a cabinet of experimental physics were added to it.

As for the natural sciences, which are taught here with much depth and detail in several establishments, they have, in the *Collège de France*, a sort of regulator which directs them,

as it were, by their generalities. It is, in fact, to this only that an establishment which, by its nature, contains no collection, ought to attach itself, and the philosophy of the sciences, the result and completion of their study, here constitutes the object of all the lectures.

Thus the improvements which the sciences have successively experienced, have always been spread by the instruction of the *Collège Royal*; and among the professors who have occupied its chairs, none can be quoted who have been strangers to their progress.

The revolution, which overthrew in France the ancient universities, suspended for some time the exercises of this establishment; but, under the name of *Collège de France*, it has since resumed a new lustre. It then found itself compelled to new efforts, in order to maintain its place among the scientific institutions, which have emulously risen in every branch of human knowledge. Nevertheless, those different sciences, even natural history, and the curative art, taught with so much perfection in private establishments, have hence derived great advantages, and here it is that public instruction comes at once to be resumed, investigated, and extended.

The present government appears to be perfectly sensible of the importance of such an

establishment. The enlightened men, the celebrated *savans*, who approach it, have pointed out in the *Collège de France* a *normal* school, completely formed, and which unites to the extent of its object the ever-powerful ascendant of seniority. The similarity between the circumstances in which this institution is at the present day and those when it was founded, affords the most certain hope of its progress being maintained and accelerated.

This is what appears to me the most interesting in the history of this ancient college. I say nothing of its present professors; their zeal is proved by their assiduous and uninterrupted lessons; their merit is before the judgment of the public; and as for their names, these are indifferent to the results of their labours. If any other motive than that of the interest of the sciences were blended with the information I now communicate, I should not think that, in this letter, I was fulfilling the object of your wishes.

P. S. It may not be useless to mention that no students are attached to the *Collège de France*. The lectures are public; and every one who is desirous of improving his mind in any branch of science, may attend them free

of expense or trouble. It is impossible for the friend of learning to withhold his admiration from so noble an institution. What, in fact, can be more liberal than this gratuitous diffusion of knowledge?

LETTER LVIII.

Paris, January 27, 1802.

If we do not consider the *Opera Buffa* as a national theatre, then the next in rank, after the Grand French Opera and the *Théâtre Français*, is the

THÉÂTRE DE L'OPÉRA COMIQUE.

This house, which is situated in the *Rue Feydeau*, near the *Rue de la Loi*, was opened for the first time in January 1791. The entrance to it is by a circular vestibule, externally decorated with caryatides, and sufficiently spacious for one carriage to enter while another drives off by an adjoining outlet. At the end of this vestibule is a long gallery, bordered by shops on both sides, which forms a second entrance by the *Rue Filles St. Thomas*.

The interior form of this theatre is a semicircle, extended in a right line at its extremities,

which places the orchestra in a central position, and renders the house one of the fittest in Paris for a concert. Two rows of Gothic pillars, one above the other, occupy nearly all its height; and though it contains eight tiers of boxes, five only are in sight. The same distribution repeated in regard to the stage-boxes, presents a very projecting pavilion, which seems to support a large triumphal arch. However grand this style of architecture may be in appearance, in effect it renders the seats very inconvenient to two-thirds of the spectators. The ornaments consist of a strange mixture of the Greek, Gothic, and Oriental. The house is said to contain two thousand persons.

In the beginning, this theatre united the performers of the original *Opéra Buffa* and some of those belonging to the old French Comic Opera, who played alternately. The former retiring from Paris in 1792, the latter for some time attracted full houses by the excellence of their style of singing, tasteful decorations, and one of the best composed orchestras in the capital.

Since then, it has experienced the changes and vicissitudes attendant on the revolution. At present, the company is composed of a selection from the performers of the *Opéra Comique* of the *Théâtre Favart* (formerly known by the name of *Théâtre Italien*), and those of the lyric theatre of

which I am now speaking. This junction has not long been effected. Previously to its taking place, the *Comédie Italienne*, where French comic operas only were represented, was still constituted as it was under the old *régime*, of which it was remarked as being the sole remnant.

Formerly, the French Comic Opera was very rich in stock-pieces, chiefly written by FAVART, SÉDAINE, MARMONTEL, HÈLE*, MONVEL, MARSOLIER, HOFFMAN, and others. Their productions were set to music by GRÉTRY, MONSIGNY, PHILIDOR, DÉSAÏDES, DALEYRAC, &c. These pieces are now seldom played, the music of them being antiquated; though for energy and truth of expression some of it surpasses that of many of the more modern compositions. The new authors are little known. The composers of the music are MÉHUL, DALEYRAC before-mentioned, BOYELDIEU, TARCHI, &c. The modern pieces the most in vogue and most attractive are *Le Prisonnier*, *l'Opéra Comique*, a piece so called, *Le Calife de Bagdad*, *Maison à vendre*, *D'Auberge en Auberge*, and a few others of the same description. All these are really pleasing comedies.

* Or HALF, an Englishman, who wrote *Le Jugement de Midas*, *l'Amant Jaloux*, and *Les Évenemens Imprevus*, pretty lyric comedies, especially the last. Notwithstanding the success of his pieces, this author is said to have died in the greatest distress.

The *Théâtre Feydeau* itself was also in possession of a great number of stock-pieces, among which were some in the style of the Grand French Opera. A considerable change seems to have taken place, as the latter are now no longer represented.

In surveying the *Opéra Comique*, one would imagine that, in lieu of one company, two separate ones had been formed to play in the same theatre. The former is the weaker in number, but the stronger in talent. The latter, though weaker, has some good performers, in the long list of those of whom it is composed; but, in general, they are either no longer in their pristine lustre, or have not yet attained a competent degree of perfection.

Seldom are the two companies mixed. Pieces in the style of the modern *Opéra Comique*, in which easy mirth is replaced by quaint jests, are played exclusively by the former. They draw crowded houses, as the public are extremely partial to them. Lyric *drames* are abandoned to the latter, and the old stock-pieces to such of the performers as choose to act in them for a small number of spectators who are so obliging as to enter the house with *orders* or *free* admission. Of all the repositories of old pieces that of the *Comédie Italienne* is the one which is the most entirely neglected. This is rather the fault of

the actors than that of the public. There are many old productions which would attract a crowd, were the best performers to play them; but who likes to pay for seeing a master-piece murdered?——We now come to speak of the qualifications of these performers.

Principal Characters and parts of Lovers.

Counter-Tenors.

ELLEVIOU, GAVAUDAN, PHILIPPE, and GAVEAUX.

ELLEVIOU. He is the first singer at the *Opéra Comique*. Nor will this opinion be contradicted by any of the elegant and pretty women who, slaves to the custom of shewing themselves at the first representation of a new piece, never begin to applaud till ELLEVIOU makes his appearance.

This performer is, in fact, gifted with a handsome person, an easy manner, an expressive countenance, and a voice, which, when he modulates it, is charming. His delivery is tolerably good, and in some parts, he is not deficient in warmth and feeling. As a singer, ELLEVIOU behind all those destined to second him. After having begun by singing bass, he has taken the parts of counter-tenor, for which, however, his voice is not suited, but he makes up for this deficiency by a very flexible tenor. He displays much art and a very modern taste. His method too is good; he makes no improper use of his

facility by lavishing graces, but his manner is too uniform. This is the greatest objection that can be made to him, in the double capacity of singer and comedian.

GAVAUDAN. This young actor, with a well-proportioned stature and a very agreeable countenance, ranks, at the *Opéra Comique*, next in merit to ELLEVIOU. His voice, as a counter-tenor, is not very brilliant, nor his means extensive; but his taste is good, and his method that of the modern school. As a player, he has a certain reputation in lyric *dramas*, and especially in those melancholy parts, the characteristic of which is a concentrated passion. He imitates TALMA, and, like him, "outsteps the modesty of Nature."

PHILIPPE. His reputation was begun by the advantages of his person, and he consolidated it by his performance in the line of knight-errantry. *Richard, cœur de lion*, was the part which secured him the public favour. His voice is still an agreeable counter-tenor; but he declines through age. As an actor, he is deficient in nobleness, and his gestures are not dignified; but, being used to the stage, and possessing some feeling, he often produces happy effects.

GAVEAUX. He has been a good singer in his youth, and is a very agreeable composer. He always acquits himself of any part he undertakes, if not in a brilliant manner, at least with

credit. Two of his musical productions are stock-pieces, and well worth seeing. *L'Amour Filial* is a happy imitation of the Italian school, and *Sophie et Moncars* is always heard with pleasure.

Characters of Fathers, Valets, or Comic Parts.

Bass-voices.

CHENARD, MARTIN, RÉZICOURT, JULIET, and MOREAU.

CHENARD. Owing to an advantageous person, this actor once stood as high in the favour of the ladies as ELLEVIOU does at present. He still possesses a fine voice, as a bass, but it is not very flexible. In the part of *Monsieur de la France*, in *l'Épreuve Villageoise*, he established his fame as a singer; yet his style is not sufficiently modelled after the modern taste, which is the Italian. As an actor, he is very useful; but, having always been treated by the public like a spoiled child, he is too apt to introduce his own sallies into his parts, which he sometimes charges with vulgarisms of the lowest description.

MARTIN. In the parts of valets, MARTIN cannot be better placed than near ELLEVIOU, whom he seconds with skill and taste. This has led the composers here to an innovation. Formerly, duets in the graceful style between men were seldom heard; but the voices of ELLE-

VIOU and MARTIN being perfectly adapted to each other, almost all the composers have written for them duets in which the *cantabile* prevails, and concerted cadences are very conspicuous. This, I understand, is unprecedented in Paris.

MARTIN made his *début* in 1788 at the *Théâtre de Monsieur* in the company of Italian buffoons. In this school he acquired that taste which he has since propagated with zeal, if not with success. At the present day, he is accused of loading his singing with superfluous embellishments, or of placing them without judgment in passages or situations where they are ill-suited. However, in *morceaux d'ensemble* he is quite at home, and, of course, shews himself to great advantage. As an actor, he is by no means remarkable, though he sometimes displays intelligence.

RÉZICOURT. He may justly be called a good comedian, without examining his merits as a singer.

JULIET. In the newspapers, this performer is called *inimitable*. His manner is his own; yet, perhaps, it would be very dangerous to advise any one to imitate it. He is not deficient in intelligence, and has the habit of the stage; but his first quality is to be extremely natural, particularly in the parts of Peasants, which he performs with much truth. He seems to be born a player, and

though he is not a musician, he always sings in tune and in time.

Moreau. An agreeable person, open countenance, animation, an ingenuous manner, and an unerring memory. He is very well placed in young Peasants, such as *Le Bon André* and *Lubin* of Favart, as well as in the parts of Valets.

Mixed characters of every sort.—Tenors. Solié, and St. Aubin.

Solié. He first appeared in the parts of young lovers with a tall stature and a handsome face, but neither of them being fashioned for such characters, he met with no applause. His voice was not very brilliant, but his method of singing was replete with grace and taste. For this, however, he obtained no credit; the Parisian public not being yet accustomed to the modern or Italian style. Clairval, the first singer at the old *Opéra Comique*, happening to be taken suddenly ill one night, Solié undertook his part at a moment's warning. Success crowned his temerity, and from that moment his merit was appreciated. His best character is *Micheli* in *Les deux Savoyards*, in which he established his reputation. In the pieces of which Méhul has composed the music, he shines by the finished manner in which he executes it; the *cantabile* is

his fort. As an actor, his declamation is not natural, and his deportment is too much that of a mannerist. However, these defects are compensated by his singing. To the music of others, he does every justice, and that which he composes himself is extremely agreeable.

St. Aubin. This performer once had a good voice as a counter-tenor; but as he now plays no other than secondary parts, one might imagine that he is retained at the theatre only in consideration of his wife's talents.

Caricatures and Simpletons.

Dozainville, and Lesage.

Dozainville. The person of this actor is very favourable for caricatures and the characters of simpletons, which he fills. The meagreness of his countenance renders it very flexible; but not unfrequently he carries this flexibility to grimace. As a singer, he must not be mentioned.

Lesage. He is a musician, but has little voice. He performs the parts of simple peasants in a natural manner, but with too much uniformity. This is a general defect attached to those characters.—Let me next introduce the female performers.

First female Singers and Parts of Lovers.
Mesdames St. Aubin, Scio, Lesage, Crétu, Philis the elder, Gavaudan, and Pingenet.

Madame St. Aubin. She is a capital actress, though chiefly in the parts of young girls; yet she is the main pillar of the *Opéra Comique*. She never has been handsome, at least when closely viewed, and is now on the wane, being turned of forty-five; but her graceful little figure and delicate features make her appear pretty on the stage. Neatness and *naïveté* characterise her acting. She has scarcely any voice, but no other songs than romances or ballads are assigned to her. She formerly played at the Grand French Opera, where she was applauded in noble and impassioned parts, though they are not, in general, suited to her manner. But an actress, high in favour with the public, is always applauded in whatever character she appears. The pieces in which Madame St. Aubin excels are *Le Prisonnier*, *Adolphe et Clara*, and *L'Opéra Comique*, which is the title of a piece, as I have already mentioned.

Madame Scio. Although she is said not to be well versed in music, she has a very extensive and powerful voice, but its tones have little variety. As an actress, she is very indifferent. Without being mean, she has no nobleness of

manner. Like almost all the performers belonging to the *Opéra Comique*, she delivers ill the dialogue, or such sentences as are not set to music. As she frequently strains her acting, persons deficient in taste are pleased to bestow on her the epithet of *great* as an actress. However, she played *Médée* in a lyric tragedy of that name; but such a Medea was never seen! As a singer, Madame Scio is a valuable acquisition to this theatre. In point of person, she is neither ordinary nor handsome.

Mademoiselle Lesage. Her singing is chaste, but destitute of that musical energy which distinguishes great singers. She plays *les ingénuités* or innocent characters; but is rather a mannerist, instead of being childish. She then employs a false voice, not at all suited to this line of acting, in which every thing should be natural.

Madame Crétu. This actress came to Paris from Bourdeaux, preceded by a great reputation. She has been handsome: a clear voice, a good method of singing, a becoming manner of acting, insured her success. She is very useful at this theatre, in pieces where the *vis comica* does not predominate.

Mademoiselle Philis the elder. This is a pretty pupil of the famous Garat. She has a clear pipe, a charming countenance, a quick eye, an

agreeable person, and some taste. She possesses as much merit as an actress as a singer*.

Madame Gavaudan. She is admired for her pretty person, pretty voice, and pretty carriage. No wonder then that she has greatly contributed to the success of the little pieces in the style of *Vaudeville*, which have been performed at this theatre.

Mesdemoiselles Pingenet. These two sisters are nothing as actresses; but seem to aspire to the title of singers, especially the elder, who begins to distinguish herself.

Noble Mothers and Duennas.

Mesdames Dugazon, Philippe, and Gonthier.

Madame Dugazon. Twenty years ago she enjoyed a great name, for which she was indebted to the bad taste that then prevailed. With large prominent eyes, and a broad flat nose, she could not be really handsome; but she had a very animated countenance. In lyric *dramas*, she personated country-girls, chambermaids, and princesses. In the first-named cast of parts, she had an ingenuous, open, but rustic manner. She played chambermaids in a style bordering on effrontery.

* Not long since she set off for Russia, without apprizing any one of her intention.

Lastly, she represented princesses, but without any dignity, and also women bereft of their reason. The part in which she had the most vogue was that of *Nina* in *La Folle par amour*. Her madness, however, appeared not to be occasioned by the sensibility of her heart. It was too much inclined to the sentimental cast of Sterne's Maria.

Madame Dugazon, who ought to have been in possession of a considerable fortune, from the vast sums of money lavished on her by Englishmen, is at this day reduced to perform the parts of mothers, in which she acquits herself so as to deserve neither praise nor censure.

Madame Philippe. Under the name of Desforges, she shone formerly in the part of *Marguerite* in *Richard, cœur de lion*. Without being a superior singer, she executes her songs with feeling.

Madame Gonthier. This actress still enjoys the benefit of her former reputation. She is excellent in a cast of parts become hacknied on the stage; namely, gossips and nurses.

I have said nothing of the *doubles* or duplicates of all these ladies, as they are, in general, bad copies of the originals.

The choruses of the *Opéra Comique* are not very numerous, and have not the strength and correctness which distinguish those of the Grand French Opera. Nor could this be expected.

The orchestra has been lately recomposed, and at present consists of a selection of excellent performers. The scenery, decorations, and dresses are deserving of commendation.*

LETTER LIX.

Paris, January 29, 1802.

WHENEVER the pen of an impartial writer shall trace the history of the French revolution, through all its accompanying vicissitudes, it will be seen that this country owed its salvation to the *savans* or men of science. The arts and sciences, which were revived by their zeal and courage, united with unceasing activity to pave the way to victories abroad, and repair mischiefs at home. Nor can it be denied, that every thing which genius, labour, and perseverance could create, in point of resources, was employed in such a manner that France was enabled, by land, to make head

* The commissioner, appointed by the government to superintend the proceedings of this theatre, has since been replaced by a *Prefect of the Palace*, whose authority is much the same as that exercised when each of the principal theatres in Paris was under the inspection of a *Lord of the Bedchamber*.

against almost all Europe, and supply her own wants, as long as the war lasted.

The *savans* who had effected such great things, for some time enjoyed unlimited influence. It was well known that to them the Republic was indebted for its safety and very existence. They availed themselves of this favourable moment for insuring to France that superiority of knowledge which had caused her to triumph over her enemies. Such was the origin of the

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL.

This establishment had a triple object; namely, to form engineers for the different services; to spread in civil society enlightened men, and to excite talents which might promote the sciences. Nothing was neglected that could tend to the accomplishment of a destination so important.

It was, in fact, time to reorganize the instruction of corps destined for public services, the greater part of which were wholly deficient in this respect. Some of them, it is true, had particular schools; but instruction there was feeble and incomplete. That for military engineers at *Mézieres*, the best conducted of all, and which admitted twenty pupils only, had suspended its exercises, in consequence of the

revolution. Necessity had occasioned the formation of a provisionary school, where the pupils received rapidly the first notions of the attack and defence of places, after which they were sent to the armies.

Such institutions neither answered the exigencies of the State, nor conduced to its glory. Their weakness was, above all, likely to be felt by men habituated to general ideas, and whose minds were still more exalted, and views enlarged, by the revolution. Those men wished that the new *School for Public Works* should be worthy of the nation. Their plan was extensive in its object, but simple in its execution, and certain in its results.

The first law concerning the *Central School for Public Works*, since called the *Polytechnic School*, was made on the 20th of Ventôse year II (10th of March 1794). From that moment, much zeal was manifested in making the necessary arrangements for its formation. On the report made to the National Convention respecting the measures taken on this subject, on the 7th of Vendémiaire year III (28th of September 1794) a decree was passed, directing a competition to be opened for the admission of four hundred pupils into this school. The examination was appointed to take place in twenty-two of the principal towns. The can-

didates were to answer in arithmetic and the elements of algebra and geometry. Those admitted received the allowance of military officers for their travelling expenses to Paris. They were to have annually twelve hundred francs, and to remain in the school three years, after which they were to be called to the different Public Services, when they were judged capable of performing them; and priority was to depend on merit. These services were the duty of military engineers, naval engineers or ship-builders, artillerists, both military and naval, engineers of bridges and highways, geographical engineers, and engineers of mines, and to them were added the service of the pupils of the school of aërostation, which GUYTON MORVEAU had caused to be established at Meudon, for the purpose of forming the aërostatic company destined for manœuvring air-balloons, applied to the art of war, as was seen at *Maubeuge*, *Fleurus*, *Aix-la-Chapelle*, &c.

However, the conception of this project was far more easy than its execution. It was doing little to choose professors from among the first men of science in Europe, if their lessons were not fixed in the mind of the pupils. Being unable to communicate them to each pupil in private, they stood in need of agents who should transmit them to this numerous

assemblage of youth, and be, as it were, the nerves of the body. To form these was the first object.

Among the young men who had presented themselves at the competition, twenty of the most distinguished were selected. Philosophical instruments and a chemical laboratory were provided for them, and they were unremittingly exercised in every part of the plan which it was resolved to execute. These pupils, the greater part of whom had come from the schools for Public Service, felt the insufficiency of the instruction which they had there received. Eager to learn, their mind became inflamed by the presence of the celebrated men who were incessantly with them. The days sufficed not for their zeal: and in three months they were capable of discharging the functions for which they were intended.

Nor was this all. At a time when opinion and power might change from one moment to another, much risk was incurred if a definitive form was not at once given to the *Polytechnic School*. The authors of this vast project had seen the revolution too near not to be sensible of that truth. But they wished first, by a trial made on a grand scale, to insure their method, class the pupils, and shew what might be expected from them. They

therefore developed to them, in rapid lectures, the general plan of instruction.

This plan had been drawn up agreeably to the views of men the best informed, amongst whom MONGE must be particularly mentioned. He had been professor at *Mezières*, and had there given the first lessons of descriptive geometry, that science so useful to the engineer. The enumeration of the various parts of instruction was reduced to a table, printed by order of the Committee of Public Safety. It comprehends mathematics, analysis applied to descriptive geometry and to the mechanism of solids and fluids, stereotomy, drawing, civil architecture, fortification, general physics, chymistry, mineralogy, and their application to the arts.

In three months, the work of three years was explained. A real enthusiasm was excited in these youths on finding themselves occupied by the sublimest ideas which had employed the mind of man. Amidst the divisions and animosities of political party, it was an interesting sight, to behold four hundred young men, full of confidence and friendship, listening with profound attention to the lectures of the celebrated *savans* who had been spared by the guillotine.

The results of so great an experiment sur-

passed the most sanguine expectations. After this preliminary instruction, the pupils were divided into brigades, and education took the course it was intended should follow.

What particularly distinguishes this establishment, is that the pupils not only receive oral lessons, but they must give in written solutions, present drawings, models, or plans for the different parts, and themselves operate in the laboratories.

On the 1st of Germinal year III (22d of March 1795) the annual courses were commenced. They were then distributed for three years, but at this day they last two only. At the same time a decree was passed, regulating the number of professors, adjuncts, ushers, the holding of the meetings of the council of instruction and administration, the functions of the director, administrator, inspector of the studies, secretary of the council, librarian, keepers of the collection of drawings, models, &c.

Since that epoch, the *Polytechnic School*, often attacked, even in the discussions of the *Legislative Body*, has maintained its ground by the impression of the reputation of the men who act there as professors, of the depth of the knowledge which makes the object of their lessons, and of the youths of superior talent who issue from it every year. The law which

after many adjournments, has fixed its existence, is dated the 25th of Frimaire year VIII (16th of December 1799.)

The most important changes introduced, are the determination of the age to be received into this school, which is from sixteen to twenty, the reduction of the pupils to the number of three hundred, the rank which is given them of serjeant of artillery of the first class, their pay fixed on the same footing, together with a fund of assistance for those labouring under difficulties, the obligation to wear a uniform, the establishment of a council of improvement, composed of three members of the National Institute, of examiners, of a general-officer or superior agent of each of the branches of the Public Service, of the director, and four commissioners taken from the council of instruction.

This council assembles every year, inquires into the state of the school, proposes its views of amelioration, respecting every department, and makes a report to the government. One of its principal functions is to harmonize the instruction with that of the Schools of Engineers, Artillery, &c. into which the pupils enter after the final examination they undergo previously to their departure.

After this, to judge of the advantages of

the *Polytechnic School*, it is sufficient to cast an eye on the printed reports, which present an account of the persons it furnishes to the different services, of those who have been taken from it for the expedition to Egypt, for the corps of *aspirans de la marine* or midshipmen, for entering into the line with the rank of officers, or into the department of commissaries of war, (into which they are admitted after their examination if no places are vacant in the Schools for Public Service), of those who have been called on to profess the sciences in the central schools (Lyceums) of the departments, some to fill the first professors' chairs in Paris, such as at the *Collège de France* and the *École Polytechnique*, of those, in short, who have quitted this school to introduce into the manufactories the knowledge which they had acquired. The last-mentioned circumstance has always been a consideration for carrying the number of pupils beyond the presumable wants of the different Public Services.

You see that this is no more than a summary of what might be said and collected from the journals of the *Polytechnic School*, (which already form four volumes in 4to. independently of the classic works published by the professors), for giving a complete history of this interesting establishment, which attracts

the notice of foreigners of all nations. BONAPARTE takes no small interest in the labours of the *Polytechnic School*, and has often said that it would be difficult to calculate the effects of the impulse which it has given towards the mathematical sciences, and of the aggregate of the knowledge imparted to the pupils.

The *Polytechnic School*, which is under the authority of the Minister of the Interior, occupies an extensive range of building, formerly known by the name of *Le petit Palais Bourbon*, contiguous to the *Palais du Corps Legislatif*. The different apartments contain every thing necessary for the elucidation of the arts and sciences here taught; but the pupils reside not at the school: they lodge and board with their friends, on the salary allowed them by the nation, and repair thither only for the prosecution of their studies.

LETTER LX.

Paris, January 30, 1802.

To judge from the records of the Old Bailey, one would conclude that, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, London must con-

tain a greater number of dishonest persons of both sexes than any metropolis in Europe. But, though more notorious thieves and daring robbers may, perhaps, be found in London than in many other great cities, yet I will venture to affirm that Paris contains more

PICKPOCKETS AND SHARPERS.

However superior too our rogues may be in boldness, I apprehend that, in dexterity, they are far inferior to those to be met with among our neighbours. To elude a more vigilant inspection, the latter are compelled to exert more art and cunning. In this dissipated capital, which is a grand theatre where they can display all their talent, and find a greater number of dupes, adventurers and swindlers of every description have long been famous; but it should seem that the females here of that stamp deserve to be no less celebrated.

Not many years ago, I heard of an English lady of quality being detected in the very act of secreting a quantity of valuable lace, to which she had taken a particular fancy at a great haberdasher's in Pall-Mall. It was said that she endeavoured to exculpate herself for this inadvertency on the ground of being in a pregnant state, which had produced an irri-

sistible longing. However this may be, she might here have got a lesson, as will appear from the following instance of ingenuity very lately practised by one of her own sex.

In the *ci-devant Palais Royal*, a haberdasher of note keeps a shop where the highest-priced articles of female wear are exhibited, immediately on coming from the hands of the manufacturer or inventor. The other day, a lady somewhat turned of thirty, of genteel appearance and engaging address, entered this shop, and asked to see some white lace veils. Several were shewn to her at the price of from twenty-five to fifty louis each. These not being sufficiently rich to please her taste, others more costly were produced, and she fixed on one of eighty louis in value. Standing before a glass, she immediately put on this veil *à la réligieuse*, that is, in the form of the hood of a nun's dress. Then taking from her bosom her little purse, she found it to contain no more than twenty louis in bank-paper, which she paid to the haberdasher as a deposit for the veil, at the same time desiring him to send one of his men with her to her *homme d'affaires* or agent, in order that he might bring back the other sixty.

As a Parisian tradesman is always extremely glad to get rid of his goods, she had no difficulty in carrying her point; and, having selected

from among the shopmen a shamefaced youth of eighteen, took him with her in the hackney-coach which she had kept in waiting. She gave the coachman her orders, and away he drove to a famous apothecary's, in the *Rue St. Honoré*. "This," said she to the shopman, "is "the residence of my *homme d'affaires:* follow "me, and you shall have your money." She accordingly alighted, and, after saying a few words in the ear of the doctor, on whose credulity she had already exercised her genius, desired him to take the young man to his private room, and settle the business, while she remained to chat with his wife.

The unsuspecting youth, seeing the lady on such terms of intimacy in the family, made no hesitation to follow the doctor to a back-parlour, where, to his extreme surprise, he was closely questioned as to his present state of health, and the rise and progress of the disorder which he had caught through his own imprudence. The more he denied the circumstance, the more the doctor persisted in his endeavours to procure ocular demonstration. The latter had previously locked the door, having been apprized by the lady that her son was exceedingly bashful, and that stratagem, and even a certain degree of violence, perhaps, must be employed to obtain evidence of a complaint, which, as it injured

her *dear boy's* constitution, disturbed her own happiness and peace of mind. The doctor was proceeding to act on this information, when the young shopman, finding his retreat cut off, vociferously demanded the sixty louis which he was come to receive in payment for the veil. "Sixty "louis in payment for a veil!" re-echoed the doctor. "Your mother begged me to examine you "for a complaint which you have inconsiderately "contracted in the pursuit of pleasure." The *dénouement* now taking place, the two dupes hastened back to the shop, when they found that the lady had decamped, having previously discharged the coach, in order that she might not be traced by the number.

The art of purloining a watch, a snuff-box, or a purse, unperceived by the owner, may, no doubt, be acquired by constant practice, till the novice becomes expert in his profession: but the admirable presence of mind displayed by Parisian sharpers must, in a great measure, be inherited from nature. What can well surpass an example of this kind mentioned by a celebrated French writer?

A certain person who had been to receive a sum of money at a banker's, was returning home with it in a hired carriage. The coachman, not remembering the name of the street whither he had been ordered to drive, got off his box,

and opened the coach-door to ask it. He found the person dead and cold. At his first exclamation, several people collected. A sharper who was passing by, suddenly forced his way through the crowd, and, in a lamentable and pathetic voice, called out: " 'Tis my father! What a " miserable wretch am I!" Then, exhibiting every mark of the most poignant grief, he got into the coach, and, crying and sobbing, kissed the dead man's face. The bystanders were affected, and dispersed, saying, one to another, " What an affectionate son!" The sharper drove on in the coach, where he found the bags of money, which were an unexpected booty, and, stopping it at a door, told the coachman that he wished to apprize his sister of the melancholy accident that had just happened. He alighted, and shut the coach-door, leaving the corpse as naked as it came into the world. The coachman, having waited a long time, inquired in vain at the house for the young man and his sister; no one had any knowledge of her, him, or the deceased.

I remember when I was last in Paris, at the beginning of the revolution, being shewn a silversmith's shop, whence a few articles having been stolen, the master was induced to examine in what manner the thieves gained admittance. Discovering an aperture where he conjectured that

a man's hand might be introduced, he prepared a noose with a proper cord, and remained in waiting the following night to see if they would repeat their visit. At a late hour, when all was quiet, he perceived a man's hand thrust through the aperture; instantly he drew tight the noose, and thought he had effectually secured the culprit; but he was mistaken. The fellow's accomplices, fearing that the apprehension of one of them would lead to the discovery of all, on finding it impossible to extricate him by any other means, cut off his wrist. When the patrole arrived at the spot, on the call of the silversmith, he was not a little astonished to find that his prisoner had escaped, though with the loss of a hand, which remained fast in the noose.

With respect to these more daring classes of rogues, every year almost produces some new race of them. Since the revolution, the criminal code having condemned to death none but those guilty of murder, housebreakers, to avoid the penalty of the law, had recourse to a practice, which put the persons whom they subjected to it to the most severe pain. This was to hold their feet to the fire till they declared where all their moveable property was to be found. Hence these villains obtained the name of *chauffeurs*. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Police,

they still occasionally exercise their cruelties in some of the departments, as may be seen by the proceedings of the criminal tribunals. I have also heard of another species of assassins, who trained blood-hounds to seize a man by the throat in certain solitary places, and then came afterwards, and plundered him at their ease. When apprehended, they coolly said: "We did not kill the man, but found him "dead."

As in former times, all sentences passed on criminals, tried in Paris, whether condemned to die or not, are put into execution on the

PLACE DE GRÈVE.

The first sentence executed here was that passed on *Marguerite Porette*, a female heretic, who was burnt alive in the year 1310.

Among the punishments which it has been found necessary to re-establish is that of marking with a hot iron. Criminals, condemned to imprisonment in irons, are exposed for two hours on a scaffold in the middle of this square. They are seated and tied to a post, having above them a label with the words of their sentence. They are clad in woollen pantaloons and a waistcoat with sleeves, one half of each of which is white; the other, brown. After being exposed two hours, they are stripped, and to their

shoulder is applied a hot iron, which there leaves the impression of the letter V, for *voleur*, thief. Women, not being condemned to imprisonment in irons, are exempt from the penalty of being marked. This punishment is said to produce considerable effect on the culprits, as well as on the spectators. Previously to its being revived, persons convicted of thieving were insolent beyond all endurance.

The *Place de Grève* is a parallelogram, one of the long sides of which is occupied by the *ci-devant Hôtel de Ville*, a tasteless edifice, begun in 1533, but not finished till 1605.

Before the revolution, the *Place de Grève* was alternately the theatre of punishments and rejoicings. On the same pavement, where scaffolds were erected for the execution of criminals, rose superb edifices for public festivals.

Here, when any criminal of note was to suffer, the occupiers of the adjoining houses made a rich harvest by letting their apartments. Every window that commanded a view of the horrid scene, was then hired at a most exorbitant price. Women of the first rank and fashion, decked in all the luxury of dress, graced even the uppermost stories. These weak-nerved females, who would have fainted at the sight of a spider mangling a fly, stood crowded together, calmly viewing the agonies of an expiring male-

factor, who, after having been racked on the wheel, was, perhaps, denied the *coup de grace* which would, in an instant, have rid him of his miserable existence.

The death of a regicide was a sort of gala to these belles; while the lead was melting over the furnace, the iron pinchers heating in the fire, and the horses disposed for tearing asunder the four quarters of the victim of the laws, some of them amused themselves with an innocent game at cards, in sight of all these terrible preparations, from which a man of ordinary feeling would avert his looks with horror.

How happens it that, in all countries on the continent, ladies flock to these odious spectacles? Every where, I believe, the populace run to behold them; but that a female of superior birth and breeding can deliberately seek so inhuman a gratification is a mystery which I cannot explain, unless, indeed, on the principle of shewing themselves, as well as that of seeing the show.

"*Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsæ.*"

LETTER LXI.

Paris, February 2, 1802.

INDEPENDENTLY of the general organization of Public Instruction, according to the new plan, of which I have before traced you the leading features, there exist several schools appropriate to different professions, solely devoted to the Public Service, and which require particular knowledge in the arts and sciences. Hence they bear the generic name of

SCHOOLS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES.

They are comprised under the following denominations.

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL.
SCHOOL OF ARTILLERY.
..... MILITARY ENGINEERS.
..... BRIDGES AND HIGHWAYS.
..... MINES.
..... NAVAL ENGINEERS.
..... NAVIGATION.

In order to be admitted into any of the above schools, the candidates must prove themselves qualified by the preliminary instruction required in the examinations at the competition prescribed for each of them. The pupils of these

schools receive a salary from the nation. At the head of them is the *Polytechnic School*, of which I have already spoken. This is the grand nursery, whence the pupils, when they have attained a sufficient degree of perfection, are transplanted into the other *Schools for Public Services*. Next come the

SCHOOLS OF ARTILLERY.

There are eight of these in the places where the regiments of artillery are garrisoned. The pupils who are sent thither as officers, after having been examined, apply their knowledge to the arts, to the construction of works, and to the manœuvres of war dependent on artillery. Each school, in which the pupils must remain two years longer, is under the superintendance of a general of brigade of the corps.

SCHOOL OF MILITARY ENGINEERS.

This school, united to that of Miners, is established at Metz. Its labours relate to the application of the theoretical knowledge which the pupils have imbibed at the *Polytechnic School*. The objects of these labours is the construction of all sorts of works of fortification, mines and counter-mines, mock-representations of sieges, attack, and defence, the drawing of plans and military surveys, in a word, all the details of

the duty of engineers in fortified places and in the field.

The number of pupils is limited to twenty. They have the rank and pay of second lieutenant. The School of Engineers, as well as the Schools of Artillery, is under the authority of the Minister at War.

Much as I wish to compress my subject, I must observe that, previously to leaving the school, the pupils undergo a strict examination respecting the objects of instruction before-enumerated. This examination is intrusted to a *jury* (as the French term it) composed of the commander in chief of the school, a general or field-officer of the corps, appointed every year by the Minister at War, and one of the permanent examiners of the Polytechnic School. *This jury forms the list of merit, which regulates the order of promotion.* Can we then wonder that the French have the first military engineers in Europe?

SCHOOL OF BRIDGES AND HIGHWAYS.

It was founded in 1787, by TRUDAINE, and continued under the direction of PERRONET, chief engineer of this corps, till his death, which happened in 1794. He was then 86 years of age. By his will, he bequeathed to this school, for the instruction of the pupils whom he loved

as his children, his library, his models, his manuscripts, and his portfolios; articles which at this day form an invaluable collection.

This school, which is at present established in the *Hôtel de Chatelet* (formerly belonging to the duke of that name) *Rue de Grenelle, St. Germain*, unites the *dépôt* or repository of plans and models to the labours relating to roads, canals, and harbours for trade. The number of pupils admitted is fifty. They are taken from the *Polytechnic School*, and retain the salary which they there received.

The instruction given to them chiefly consists in the application of the principles of physics and mathematics to the art of planning and constructing works relative to roads, canals, and sea-ports, and the buildings belonging thereto; the means of execution, and the mode of forming plans and estimates of the works to be executed, and the order to be observed in keeping the accounts.

The *School of Bridges and Highways* is under the authority of the Minister of the Interior.

PRACTICAL SCHOOLS OF MINES.

One of these schools is established at Geislautern, in the department of La Sarre; and the other, at Pesay, in the department of Mont-Blanc.

The Director and Professors form a committee for the working of the mines of Pesay, as well as for the instruction of the pupils. In consequence of the report of this committee, the *Council of Mines*, established in Paris, proposes to the government the measures necessary to be adopted. Twenty pupils, who have passed their examination at the *Polytechnic School*, are attached to the practical schools, for the purpose of applying the theoretical part of their instruction. Extra-scholars, with testimonials of good behaviour and capacity, are admitted to be educated at their own expense. These schools are also under the authority of the Minister of the Interior.

SCHOOL OF NAVAL ENGINEERS.

The *School of Naval Architects*, which existed in Paris, has been removed to Brest, under the name of *École des Ingénieurs des Vaisseaux*. No pupils are admitted but such as have been students, at least two years, in the *Polytechnic School*. The examination of the candidates takes place every year, and the preference is given to those who excel in descriptive geometry, mechanics, and the other branches of knowledge appropriated to the first year's study at that school. When the pupils have proved, in the repeated examinations

which they must undergo, that they are sufficiently qualified, they are sent to Brest (as vacancies occur), in order to apply the theory they have acquired to the different works carried on in that port, where they find both the example and the precept, and are taught every thing relative to the construction of ships of war and merchant-vessels.

This school is under the authority of the Minister of the naval department. The pupils admitted into it, receive a salary of 1800 francs (*circa* £. 75 sterling) a year.

SCHOOLS OF NAVIGATION.

The Schools of Mathematics and Hydrography, established for the navy of the State, and the Schools of Hydrography destined for the merchant-service, bear the name of *Écoles de Navigation*.

Every year, there is a competition for the admission of candidates for naval employment. The Hydrographical Examiner makes a general tour to the different ports, where he interrogates the pupils in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, statics, and navigation. According to these examinations, they are admitted to the rank of *aspirans de marine* or midshipmen, captains of merchant-ships for long voyages, masters of coasting-vessels, pilots, &c.

By a late decree of the Consuls, no one can be admitted to the examination prescribed for being received as master in the coasting-trade, unless he is twenty-four years of age, and has served five years on board the ships of war belonging to the Republic.

In my letter of the 15th of January, I have shewn you that Public Instruction is to be divided into four classes: 1. In Primary Schools, established by the *Communes*. 2. In Secondary Schools, established by the *Communes*, and kept by private masters. 3. In Lyceums. 4. In *Special Schools*. In the two last-mentioned establishments, the pupils are to be maintained at the expense of the nation.

Before I particularize the *Special Schools*, I must mention a national institution, distinguished by the appellation of

PRYTANÉE FRANÇAIS.

It is divided into four colleges, established at Paris, St. Cyr, St. Germain-en-Laye, and Compiegne. It was destined for the gratuitous education of the children of the military killed in the field of honour, and of public functionaries who might happen to die in the discharge of their office.

By a decree of the Consuls, dated the 1st of Germinal year VIII (22nd of March 1800) the number of pupils, in each of the Colleges of Paris, St. Cyr, and St. Germain-en-Laye, is limited to two hundred, and to three hundred, in that of Compiegne. An augmentation, however, is to be made in favour of the new departments. The pupils are named by the First Consul. On entering the College, they bring a stated proportion of necessaries, after which they are wholly maintained at the expense of the nation till they have finished their studies. The government provides for the advancement of those who give the greatest proof of good conduct and talent. The pupils cannot remain in either of these four colleges beyond the age of eighteen.

As I have before observed, the Central Schools are, in future, to bear the name of Lyceums, and the highest degree of public instruction is to be acquired in the

SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

In these upper schools are to be particularly taught, in the most profound manner, the useful sciences, together with jurisprudence, medicine, natural history, &c. The Special Schools now in existence are to be continued, subject to such modifications as the

government may think fit to introduce for the benefit of the Public Service. They are still under the immediate superintendance of the Minister of the Interior.

The *Collège de France* I have before described: the Museum of Natural History, the Special School of docimastic Mineralogy and Chemistry, and that for Oriental languages, I shall speak of elsewhere; but I shall now proceed to give you a rapid sketch of the others which I have not yet noticed, beginning with the

SPECIAL SCHOOL OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE.

This institution was founded in 1648, at the instigation of Le Brun. It was formerly held in the *Place du Louvre*, but is now removed to the *ci-devant Collège des Quatre-Nations*, which has taken the name of *Palais des Beaux Arts*. This is the only school in Paris that has never indulged in any vacation. Each professor is on duty for two months. During the first month, he gives his lessons in the school of living models; during the other, in the school of the antique, called *la bosse*. It may not be uninteresting to give you an idea of the

Competitions.

Every year there is a competition in Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, which is to be called *National Prize.* Its object is to confer on those who have gained the first prize, at present proposed by the Institute, the advantage of an allowance of 1200 francs for five years, which is insured to them at the French School of Fine Arts at Rome. During their stay there, they are lodged, boarded, and taken care of, in case of illness, at the expense of the Republic.

A competition takes place every six months for the rank of places in the schools; and another, every three months for the distribution of medals.

There is also a prize, of 100 francs, founded by M. DE CAYLUS, for a head expressive of character, painted or drawn from nature; and another prize of 300 francs, founded by LATOUR, for a half-length, painted after a model, and of the natural size.

Independently of the competition of the school, there is every year a general competition followed by a distribution of the works of encouragement, granted to the artists who have distinguished themselves most in the annual exhibition of the *Salon du Louvre.* A jury, named by the competitors themselves, examines the different pictures, classes them according to the degree of merit which it finds they pos-

sess, and the Minister of the Interior allots to each of the artists *crowned* a sum in payment of a new work which they are bound to furnish to the government.

NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

In this school, which is held in the *Louvre*, the Professor of Architecture delivers lectures on the history of that art, and the theory of its different branches, on the orders, and edifices erected by the ancients, and on the works of Vitruvius, Palladio, Scamozzi, and Vignole. He takes no small pains to make known the bold style of Grecian architecture, which the Athenians chiefly employed during the ages when they prided themselves on being a free people.

The Professor of Mathematics explains the principles of arithmetic and elementary geometry, which he applies to the different branches of civil and military architecture, such as levelling, the art of constructing plans, and perspective.

The Professor of Stereotomy, in his lectures, chiefly comprises masonry and carpentry; he points out the best methods of employing those arts in civil and military buildings. His demonstrations relate to the theoretical and practical part of both branches. All the

pupils and students of architecture are indiscriminately admitted to the competition for the great prize of architecture, provided they are not foreigners.

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

This establishment, situated in the *Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière,* was founded on the 16th of Thermidor year III, (4th of August 1795) for the preservation and reproduction of music in all its branches.

It is composed of a director, three inspectors of teaching, a secretary, a librarian, and thirty-five professors.

The director presides over the whole establishment; the inspectors superintend the teaching, examine the pupils, and teach the branches of study attributed to them by the regulation.

In the Conservatory, the instruction is divided as follows: composition, harmony, solfaing, singing, violin, violincello, harpsicord, organ, flute, hautboy, clarinette, French-horn, bassoon, trumpet, trombonne, serpent, preparation for singing, and declamation applicable to the lyric stage.

The completion of the study is effected by a series of lectures, treating specially of the relations between the sciences and the art of music.

Three hundred pupils of both sexes, taken in equal number from each department, are in-

structed gratuitously in the Conservatory. The principal points towards which their studies are directed, are, to keep up music in society, to form artists for the execution of public *fêtes*, for the armies, and for the theatres.

These pupils are admitted after an examination, which takes place four times a year. Prizes are distributed annually, in a public meeting of the Conservatory, to the pupils who distinguish themselves in each branch of study.

February 2, in continuation.

To the preceding brief account of the Conservatory, I shall subjoin a few observations on the

PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE.

Till the year 1789, this was the country where the greatest expense was incurred in cultivating music; yet the means which were employed, though very numerous, produced but little effect, and contributed not to the improvement of that art. Every thing even announces that its progress would have been still more retarded, but for the introduction of the Italian Opera, in 1645, by Cardinal Mazarin.

The brilliant success of *Orfeo e Euridice*, in 1647, determined the national taste in favour of

this sort of *spectacle*, and gave birth to the wish of transplanting it to the French stage. It was in 1659 that the first opera, with music adapted to a French poem, was performed at Issy.

Since the epoch of the establishment of the French opera, every department belonging to it, with the sole exception of the singing, has been so much improved, that it is become the most brilliant *spectacle* in Europe. But, as the lyric theatres in France were always obliged to seek recruits among the pupils formed in the schools maintained by the clergy for the service of public worship, the influence of the clerical mode of instruction was felt; and this was, in fact, the source of the bad taste which for a long time characterized French singing.

Had the grand opera in France been continued an Italian one, as it was first established, (like those subsequently introduced in the principal cities of Europe) it would have been supported by performers formed by the Conservatories of Italy; and the good taste of those schools would have balanced or proscribed the bad taste of the French cathedrals; but the genius of the seventeenth century chose that the French language, purified and fixed by the writers who rendered it illustrious, should also become the language of the lyric theatre. Musical instruc-

tion, remaining entirely subservient to the customs of religion, was unable to keep pace with the rapid progress of the arts and sciences during that brilliant period.

Among the defects of the old system of teaching music, must be placed that of confining it to men; nevertheless, the utility of women in concerts and plays was as incontestable then as it is at the present day. Public instruction was therefore due to them in that point of view; but, had no such consideration existed, they should have been admitted to participate in this instruction, in order to propagate the art in society. The success of this method would have been infallible: as soon as women should have cultivated the musical art with success, its naturalization would have been effected in France, as it has been in Germany and Italy.

The expense of the musical instruction pursued in the schools belonging to the cathedrals was immense, compared with its results in every branch of the art. As to composers, they produced but a very small number, and few of these distinguished themselves; no instrumental performer of eminence ever issued from them; and, with few exceptions, the singers they formed were very indifferent.

The necessity of introducing a better method of singing induced the government, in 1783, to

establish a *Special School of Singing and Declamation.* This institution continued in full exercise for ten years; but, though the celebrated PICCINI was appointed to preside over the vocal department, the habits of the old school obstructed its progress, and prevented it from producing the good which was expected from it.

At the epoch of the dissolution of the monarchical institutions, there remained in France only the School of Music of the Parisian national guard, and that of Singing and Declamation just mentioned. The republican government ordered them to be united, and thus was formed the *Conservatory of Music.*

Nor let it be imagined that policy has had no share in establishing this institution. It has furnished the numerous bands of musicians rendered necessary by the levy of fourteen armies which France had, at one and the same time, in the field. It is well known that music has done almost wonders in reviving the courage of the French soldiers, who, when Victory seemed adverse to them, inclined her in their favour, by rallying to the tune of the *Marseillois.* In the heat of action, joining their voice to the instruments, and raising themselves to a pitch of enthusiasm, they received or dealt out death, while they kept singing this hymn. The French then are no less indebted to

Rouget de Lille than the Spartans were to Tyrtæus. At the beginning of the revolution, they had no songs of the warlike kind, except a few paltry ballads sung about the streets. Rouget, who was then an officer of engineers at Strasburg, was requested to compose a martial hymn. Full of poetic fire, he shut himself up in his chamber, and, in the course of one night, wrote the words of the *Marseillois*, adapting to them music, also of his own composition. Notwithstanding this patriotic production, and the courage which the author is said to have displayed during the war, he was twice imprisoned, at one time on suspicion of royalism; at another, of terrorism.

Independently of the great number of musicians with which the Conservatory has supplied the armies, it has furnished between two and three hundred to the theatres, as well in Paris as in the departments.* The band of the Consular guard was formed from the pupils of the Conservatory, and sixty of them at present compose the orchestra, known in Paris by the name of *Concert Français*, and the execution of which has been much applauded by many celebrated composers.

Its members meet to discuss the theories which

* In France are reckoned seventy-five lyric theatres, exclusively of those in the newly-united departments.

may improve and extend the different branches of the musical art. They have already laid the principal foundations of a body of elementary works for teaching them in perfection. *Les Principes élementaires de Musique*, and a *Traité d'Harmonie*, which is said to have gained the universal approbation of the composers of the three schools, assembled to discuss its merits, are already published. A method of singing, established on the best principles of the Italian school, applied to French declamation, is now in the press; and these publications are to be successively followed by other didactic works relative to the history of the art.

A principal cause of the present scarcity of fine voices in France, is the war which she has had to maintain for ten years, by armies continually recruited by young men put in requisition at the period when the voice is forming, and needs to be cultivated in order to acquire the qualities which constitute a good singer.

Formerly, French commerce derived but very little advantage from articles relating to music; but the means employed by the Conservatory may probably turn the scale in favour of this country, as well as render it, in that respect, independent of foreign nations.

Before the revolution, England furnished France with *piano-fortes*, the common price of

which was from three to five hundred francs. Germany mostly supplied her with wind and string instruments. German French-horns, though coarsely-made instruments, cost seventy-two francs, and the good violins of the Tyrol were paid for as high as one hundred and twenty. The consumption of these instruments was considerable. Nor will this appear surprising, as previously to the foundation of the Conservatory, the instrumental musicians, employed in the French regiments and places of public amusement, were mostly Germans.

The French *piano-fortes* are now in request in most parts of Europe, and their price has, in consequence, increased from one thousand to two thousand four hundred francs. The price of French-horns, made in Paris, which, from being better finished, are preferable to those of Germany, has, in like manner, risen from three to five hundred francs. Parisian violins have increased in proportion.

With respect to printed music, the French import none; but, on the contrary, export a great deal; and the advantages resulting from these two branches of commerce, together with the stamp-duty attached to the latter, are said to be sufficient to defray the expenses of the musical establishments now existing, or those proposed to be created.

Before I close this letter, I must not omit to mention a very useful institution, for the promotion of the mechanical arts, established in the *Rue de l'École de Médecine*, and called the

GRATUITOUS SCHOOL FOR DRAWING.

It was founded in the year 1766, for the instruction of fifteen hundred children intended for mechanical professions, and was the first beneficent establishment opened in favour of the common people. Literature, sciences, and liberal arts had every where public schools; mechanical arts alone were neglected. The lower orders, by whom they were exercised, had no other means of learning them, and of developing the faculties of their mind, than the blind routine of apprenticeship.

The success of this school had progressively caused similar ones to be instituted in a great number of towns of France, but most of them are buried under the ruins of the revolution; that of Paris has escaped the general overthrow; and, though it has lost a considerable portion of its revenue, it still admits about six hundred pupils. They are taught every thing relative to the mechanical arts, such as drawing in all its various branches, military, civil, and naval architecture, hydraulics, arithmetic, land-survey-

ing, mensuration, perspective, stone-cutting, and in short such parts of mathematics and practical geometry as relate to those different objects.

The Gratuitous School for Drawing must not be assimilated to establishments intended for improving the taste of those who follow the career of the liberal arts. It presents immediately to the children of the lower orders of the people the instruction that suits them best. Here, every thing is useful. Not only are the pupils instructed *gratis*, but the school furnishes to the indigent, recommended by one of the founders, the paper, pencils, and instruments necessary for their studies in the classes, and also models for exercising their talents at home.

I shall speak elsewhere of the *Special School of Medicine* of Paris; there are two others, one at Montpellier, and one at Strasburg. At Alfort, near Paris, is established, on a grand scale, a

VETERINARY SCHOOL.

It would lead me too far to particularize every department of this extensive establishment; but one of these is too useful to be passed over in silence. Here are spacious hospitals where animals are classed, not only according to their spe-

cies, but also according to the species of disorder by which they are affected. Every person may bring hither sick animals, on paying for their food and medicaments only, the operations and dressings being performed and applied *gratis*.

There are also Veterinary Schools at Lyons, Turin, and Rodez.

In addition to all these schools, are to be established, in different parts of the Republic, the following new *Special Schools*.

Ten of Jurisprudence.

Three of Medicine.

Four of Natural History, Physics, and Chymistry.

One of Transcendent Mathematics.

Two of Technology.

One of Public Economy, enlightened by Geography and History.

One of the Arts dependent on design, and, lastly,

A new Military School.

From the foregoing enumeration, it is evident that the government can never be at a loss for persons duly qualified to perform the duties of every branch of the Public Service. True it is that the nation is at a considerable expense in giving to them the instruction

which fits them for the employment; but, in return, what advantages does not the nation derive from the exertion of their talent?

LETTER LXVII.

Paris, February 5, 1802.

In one of your recent letters, you interrogated me respecting the changes which the revolution had produced in the ceremonies immediately connected with the increase and decrease of population. While the subject is fresh in my mind, I shall present the contrast which I have observed, in the years 1789-90 and 181-2, in the ceremony of

FUNERALS.

Under the old *régime*, there was no medium in them; they were either very indecorous or very expensive. I have been positely assured that eighteen francs were paid for what was called a parish-funeral, and not unfrequently a quarrel arose between the agent of the rector and the relations of the deceased. However, as it was necessary to bury ever one, the *Commissaire de police* declared the fact, if the relations were unable to pay. Those

for whom eighteen francs were paid, had a coffin in which they were buried; the others were laid in a common coffin or shell, from which they were taken to be put into the ground. In a parish-funeral, whether paid or not, several dead bodies were assembled, that is, they were carried one after the other, but at the same time to the same ground. They were conducted by a single priest, reciting by the way the accustomed prayers.

Other funerals were varied without end, according to the fortune or pleasure of the relations. For persons of the richest class, a flaming chapel was constructed at the entrance of the house. This chapel was hung with black cloth, and in it was placed the corpse, surrounded by lighted torches. The apartments were also hung with black for the reception of the persons who were to attend the funeral procession. The priests came to conduct the corps from the house of the deceased. They were more or less numerous, had or had not wax tapers, according to the will of those who defrayed the expenses. If the presentation of the corpse at the parish-church took place in the morning, a mass was sung; if in the evening, obsequies only were chaunted, and the former service was deferred till the next morning. The relations and friends, in

mourning, followed the corpse. These persons walked in the procession, according to their degree of relationship to the deceased, and besides their complete mourning-suit, wore a black cloak, more or less long, according to the quality of the persons (or the price paid for it), and a flapped hat, from which was suspended a very long crape band. Their hair, unpowdered, fell loose on their back. In lieu of a cloak, lawyers, whether presidents, counsellors, attornies, or tipstaffs, wore their black gown. On the cuff of their coat, men wore weepers, consisting of a band of cambric. Every one wore black gloves, and likewise a long pendent white cravat. People of the highest rank wore *cottés crépés*, that is, a sort of crape petticoat, which fell from the waist to the feet. This was meant to represent the ancient coat of arms.

Servants in mourning, or pages for princes, supported the train of the cloak or gown of persons above the common rank. Other servants, also in mourning, surrounded the relations and friends of the deceased, holding torches with his armorial bearings, if he was a *noble*. Persons extremely rich or very elevated in rank, hired a certain number of poor (from fifty to three hundred), over whom were thrown several ells of coarse iron gray

cloth, to which no particular form was given. They walked before the corpse, holding large lighted torches. The procession was closed by the carriages of persons belonging to it; and their owners did not get into them till their return from the funeral. Sometimes on coming out of the parish-church, where the presentation of the corpse was indispensable, the rector performing the office of magistrate in regard to the delivery of the certificate of presentation, the corpse was carried into a particular church to be buried. This was become uncommon before the revolution, as to do this it was necessary to possess a vault, or pay extremely dear, it being prohibited by law, except in such cases, to bury the dead in churches.

When the deceased belonged to a society or corporation, they sent a deputation to attend him to the grave, or followed in a body, if he was their chief. At the funeral of a prince of the blood, all his household, civil and military, marched in the procession. The *corbillard*, or sort of hearse, in which his highness was carried to *St. Denis*, was almost as large as the moveable theatre which Mr. Flockton transports from fair to fair in England. Calculated in appearance for carrying the body of a giant, it was decorated with escutcheons, and drawn by eight horses, also caparisoned to correspond

with the hearse. These, however, were but the trappings of woe.

While this funereal car moved slowly forward amidst a concourse of mourners, its threefold hangings concealed from the eye of the observer the journeymen coach and harness makers, drinking, and playing at dice on the lid of his highness's coffin, by way of dispelling the *ennui* of the journey. These careless fellows were placed there to be at hand to repair any accident that might happen on the road; so, while, on the outside of the hearse, all wore the appearance of sadness; within, all was mirth; no bad image of the reverse of grandeur and the emptiness of human ostentation.

Such were the ceremonies observed in funerals before the revolution. Passing over the interval, from its commencement in 1789 to the end of the year 1801, I shall describe those practised at the present day. It now depends on the relations to have the corpse presented at the parish-church; but there are many persons who dispense with this ceremony. The priests receive the corpse at the door of the church. It is carried thither in a *corbillard*. Each municipality has its own, and there are twelve municipalities in Paris. Some of them have adopted the Egyptian style; some, the

Greek; and others, the Roman, for the fashion of their *corbillard*, according to the taste of the municipality who ordered its construction. It is drawn by two horses abreast, caparisoned somewhat like those of our hearses. The coachman and the four bearers are clothed in iron gray or black. An officer of the police, also clothed in black, and holding a cane with an ivory head, walks before the *corbillard* or hearse. Each corpse has its particular coffin furnished by the municipality. Arrangements have been so made that the rich are made to pay for the poor. The coffin is covered with a black cloth, without a cross, for fear of scaring philosophers and protestants. The relations follow on foot, or in carriages, even in town. Few of them are in mourning, and still fewer wear a cloak.

At the *Sainte Chapelle*, near the *Palais de Justice*, is a private establishment where mourning is let out for hire. Here are to be had *corbillards* on a more elegant plan. These are carriages hung on springs, and bearing much resemblance to our most fashionable sociables with a standing awning; so much so, that the first of them I saw I mistook for a *mourning* sociable. Some are ornamented with black feathers. Caparisons, hangings, every thing is in black, as well as the coachman. This spe-

culator also lets out mourning coaches, black without and within, like those in use in London. At a few funerals, these are hired for the mourners, and at a recent one fifteen of these carriages were counted in the procession. However, this luxury of burials is not entirely come again into fashion. In the inside of the church, every thing passes as formerly.

I shall now proceed from the *grave* to the *gay*, and conclude this letter with a concise observation on

MARRIAGES.

The *civil* act of marriage is entered into at the office of the municipality. But this civil act must not be confounded with the contract, drawn up by the notary, and containing the stipulations, clauses, and conditions. The former signifies merely that such a man and such a woman take each other for man and wife. There are few, if any, persons married, who, from the municipality, do not repair to the parish-church, or go thither the next morning; the civil act being considered by individuals only as the ceremony of the betrothing, and till the priest has given the nuptial benediction, the relations take care that the intended bride and bridegroom shall have no opportunity of anticipating the duties of marriage.

Political opinions, therefore, prevent but few persons from going to church. Mass is said in a low voice, during which the priest, or the rector, receives the promise of the wedded pair. With little exception, the ceremony is the same for all. Those who pay well are married at the high altar; the rector addresses to them a speech in which he exhorts them to live happily together; the beadles perform their duty; and the organist strikes up a voluntary.

In regard to marriages, the present and former times presenting no other contrast, I have nothing more to add on the subject.

LETTER LXIII.

Paris, February 6, 1803.

The mode of life of the persons with whom I chiefly associate here, precludes me from reading as much as I could wish, either for instruction or amusement. This, you will say, I ought not to regret; for a traveller visits foreign countries to study mankind, not books. Unquestionably, the men who, like splendid folios in a library, make at present the most conspicuous figure in this metropolis, are worth studying; and, could we lay them open to our

inspection, as we do books of a common description, it would be extremely entertaining to turn them over every morning, till we had them, in a manner, by heart. But I rather apprehend that they partake, more or less, of the qualities of a book just come out of the hands of the binder, which it is difficult to open. Let us therefore content ourselves with viewing them as we would volumes of a superbly-bound edition, not to be examined by the general observer, and direct our eyes to such objects as are fully exposed to investigation.

In Paris, there are several public libraries, the greater part of them open every day; but that which eclipses all the others, is the

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE.

Charles V, justly surnamed the *Wise*, from the encouragement he gave to learning, may be considered as the first founder of this library. According to the President Henault, that king had collected nine hundred volumes; whereas king John, his father, possessed not twenty. This collection was placed in a tower of the *Louvre*, called *La Tour de la Librairie*, which was lighted up every night, in order that the learned might pursue their studies there at all hours.

After the death of Charles VI, in 1423, the inventory amounted to no more than one hundred and twenty volumes, though several works had been added, because, on the other hand, a great number had been lost.

When Paris fell into the power of the English, in 1429, the Duke of Bedford, then regent of France, purchased these books, for which he paid 1200 livres, and the library was entirely dispersed. Charles VII, being continually engaged in war, could not concern himself in its re-establishment. Lewis XI collected the remains scattered in different royal residences, and availed himself of the resources afforded by the invention of printing, which was discovered at Strasburg or Mentz in 1440.

Printers, however, were not established in Paris till 1470, and in that same year, they dedicated to Lewis XI one of the first books which they printed. Books were, at this time, very scarce and dear, and continued so for several years, both before and after the discovery of that invention. Twenty thousand persons then subsisted in France by the sale of the books which they transcribed. This was the reason why printing was not at first more encouraged.

Charles VIII added to this literary establishment such works as he was able to obtain in

his conquest of Naples. Lewis XII increased it by the library of Petrarch. Francis I enriched it with Greek manuscripts; but what most contributed to augment the collection was the ordinance of Henry II, issued in 1556, which enjoined booksellers to furnish the royal libraries with a copy on vellum of all the works printed by privilege; and, under the subsequent reigns, it gradually acquired that richness and abundance which, before the revolution, had caused it to be considered as one of the first libraries in Europe.

In 1789, the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, as it was till then called, was reckoned to contain one hundred and eighty thousand printed volumes, eighty thousand manuscripts, a prodigious number of medals, antiques, and engraved stones, six thousand port-folios of prints, and two thousand engraved plates. But, under its present denomination of *Bibliothèque Nationale*, it has been considerably augmented. Agreeably to your desire, I shall point out whatever is most remarkable in these augmentations.

The buildings, which, since the year 1721, contain this vast collection, formerly made part of the *Hôtel Mazarin*. The entrance is by the *Rue de la Loi*. It is at present divided into four departments, and is managed by a

conservatory, composed of eight members, namely:

1. Two conservators for the printed books, M. M. Capperonnier and Van-Praet.

2. Three for the manuscripts, M. M. Langlès, Laporte Dutheil, and Dacier.

3. Two for the antiques, medals, and engraved stones, M. M. Millin and Gosselin.

4. One for the prints and engraved plates. M. Joly.

The first department, containing the printed books, occupies, on the first floor of the three sides of the court, an extent of about nine hundred feet by twenty-four in breadth. The rooms, which receive light on one side only, are equal in height. In the second room to the right is the *Parnasse Français*, a little mountain, in bronze, covered with figures a foot high, and with medals, representing French poets. Lewis XIV here occupies a distinguished place under the figure of Apollo. It was a present made by Titon du Tillet.

In another of these rooms, built on purpose, are a pair of globes of an extraordinary size, constructed, in 1683, by Father Coronelli, a Jesuit, for Cardinal d'Estrées, who presented them to Lewis XIV. The feet of these globes rest in a lower apartment; while their hemis-

pheres project by two apertures made in the floor of the first story, and are thus placed within reach of the observer. Their diameter is eleven feet, eleven inches. The celebrated BUTTERFIELD made for them two brass circles, (the one for the meridian, the other for the horizon), each eighteen feet in diameter.

Since the year 1789, the department of printed books has received an augmentation of one hundred and forty thousand volumes, either arising from private acquisitions, or collected in France, Italy, Holland, Germany, or Belgium. Among these is a valuable series of works, some more scarce than others, executed in the XVth century, which has rendered this department one of the most complete in Europe. I shall abstain from entering into a detail of the articles assembled in it, several of which deserve particular notice. A great many ancient specimens of the typographical art are on vellum, and give to this collection a value which it would be no easy matter to appreciate. All the classes of it present a great number, the enumeration of which would far exceed my limits.

The department of manuscripts, which is placed in a gallery one hundred and forty feet in length, by twenty-two in breadth, has been increased in proportion to that of the printed books. The library of Versailles, that of several emigrants,

the chapters of various cathedrals, the Sorbonne, the *Collège de Navarre* in Paris, and the different suppressed religious corporations, have enriched it with upwards of twenty thousand volumes; eight thousand of these belonged to the library of *St. Germain-des-Prés*, which was burnt in 1793-4, and was immensely rich in manuscripts and old printed books.

About fifteen hundred volumes have been taken from Italy, Holland, and Germany. Among those arrived from Italy, we must distinguish the original manuscript of RUFFIN, a priest of Aquilea, who lived in the IVth century, containing, on papyrus or Egyptian paper, the Latin translation of the Jewish antiquities of FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS; the grammar of PROBUS or PALÆMON, a manuscript of the Vth century, on vellum, in uncial characters; a very beautiful volume in Syriac, containing the Four Evangelists, a manuscript on vellum of the VIth century; the two celebrated manuscripts of Virgil of the VIIth century, the one from the Vatican, the other from Florence, both on vellum. A roll, in good preservation, composed of several skins, sewed together, containing the Pentateuch in Hebrew, a manuscript of the IXth century. A Terence, with figures of the time and a representation of the masks introduced on the stage by the ancients, together with the various poetical works

of PRUDENTIUS, manuscripts on vellum of the IXth century. The Terence is that of the Vatican, in praise of which Madame DACIER speaks in her translation.

The manuscripts of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, which had so long constituted the ornament of the library of Brussels, now increase the fame of those which the *Bibliothèque Nationale* already possessed of this description. Their number is about five hundred volumes; the greater part of them are remarkable for the beauty and richness of the miniatures by which they are embellished, and are scarcely inferior in magnificence to the primer of Anne de Bretagne, wife of Lewis XII, to that of Cardinal Richelieu, to the primer and battles of Lewis XIV, and to a heap of other manuscripts which rendered this *ci-devant Bibliothèque du Roi* so celebrated in foreign countries.

Five large apartments on the second floor are occupied by titles and genealogies, which are still preserved here, in about five thousand port-folios or boxes, for the purpose of verifying the claims to property, and assisting the historian in his researches.

The department of medals, antiques and engraved stones has, since 1789, also experienced an abundant augmentation. The medals are in

a cabinet at the end of the Library; the antiques are in another, above it, on the second floor.

In 1790, the engraved stones which had been previously locked up in the drawers of the council-chamber at Versailles, were conveyed hither, to the number of eight hundred. It would be too tedious to dwell on the beauty, merit, and scarceness of these stones, as well as on their finished workmanship and degree of antiquity. Among them, the beautiful ring, called the *seal of Michael Angelo*, claims admiration.

In 1791, some antiquities which constituted part of the treasure of *St. Denis*, were brought hither from that abbey. Among these valuable articles, we must particularly distinguish the chalice of the Abbot SUGER; a vase of sardonyx, with two handles formed of raised snakes, on which are represented, with admirable art, ceremonies relating to the worship of Bacchus; a large gold cup, ornamented with enamel of various colours; a very large urn of porphyry, which formerly served as a sepulchral monument; several baptismal fonts; the arm-chair of King Dagobert, a piece of very extraordinary workmanship for the time in which it was executed. Among the valuable articles removed hither from *La Sainte Chapelle* in Paris, in the same year, are to be particularly remarked a

sardonyx, representing the apotheosis of Augustus, and commonly called *l'agathe de la Sainte Chapelle.* This stone is the largest and rarest known of that species. It was brought to France in the year 1383 by king Charles V.

At the end of 1792, the cabinet of medals of *St. Geneviève*, forming in the whole seventeen thousand articles, and its fine collection of antique monuments, increased the new riches accumulated in the *Bibliothèque Nationale.* In 1794, a beautiful series of antiquities, consisting of a great number of imperial medals, of nations, cities, and kings, of all sizes, in gold, silver, and bronze, together with little painted figures, busts, instruments of sacrifices, &c. arrived here from Holland.

In 1796, the department of medals was also enriched by several articles from the *Garde-Meuble* or Jewel-Office. Among them were some suits of armour belonging to several of the kings of France, particularly that of Francis I, that of Henry IV, and that of Lewis XIV. These were accompanied by a quantity of arms, helmets, shields, breast-plates, and weapons used in the ancient tournaments, as well as quivers, bows, arrows, swords, &c.

Towards the end of the year 1798 and in 1799, several valuable articles arrived here from Italy,

among which are two crowns of gold, enriched with precious stones, worn by the ancient kings of Lombardy, at the time of their coronation; the engraved stones and medals of the Pope's cabinet; a head of Jupiter Ægiochus, on a ground of sardonyx, a master-piece of art, which is above all eulogium; the celebrated Isiac table, in copper incrustated with silver, a valuable table of Egyptian mythology, which is presumed to have been executed, either at Alexandria or at Rome, in the first or second century of the christian era; some oriental weapons; a *fetfa* or diploma of the Grand Signior contained in a silk purse, &c.

The department of prints and engraved plates, formed of the celebrated cabinets of Marolles, Beringhen, Gaignières, Uxelles, Begon, Caylus, Fontette, Mariette, &c. contained, before the revolution the most ample, rich, and valuable collection in Europe. It is placed in the *entresol*, and is divided into twelve classes.

The first class comprehends sculptors, architectural engineers, and engravers, from the origin of the French nation to the present day, arranged in schools.

The second, prints, emblems, and devices of piety.

The third, every thing relative to fables and Greek and Roman antiquities.

The fourth, medals, coins, and heraldry.

The fifth, public festivals, cavalcades, and tournaments.

The sixth, arts and mathematics.

The seventh, prints relating to novels and books of entertainment.

The eighth, natural history in all its branches.

The ninth, geography.

The tenth, plans and elevations of ancient and modern buildings.

The eleventh, portraits of all professions, to the number of upwards of fifty thousand.

The twelfth, a collection of the fashions and dresses of almost every country in the world.

Since 1789, the augmentations made to it are considerable. Among these must be distinguished four hundred and thirty-five volumes brought from the library of Versailles, and fifty-two others, infinitely valuable, respecting China, found at the residence of M. Bertin, Minister; about eight thousand prints brought from Holland, the greater part of them very fine impressions; and about twelve thousand collected by different emigrants, almost all modern, indeed, but one half of which are select, and remarkable for their fine preservation.

Among five hundred volumes, obtained from the suppressed religious corporations, are to be

remarked one hundred and nine port-folios from the abbey of *St. Victor*, in Paris, containing a beautiful series of mythological, historical, and typographical subjects. This forms a valuable addition to the collection of the same kind of which the department of prints was already in possession.

In one hundred and forty-four volumes brought from Cologne, there are several scarce and singular engravings.

As for sixty articles sent from Italy, they are, with the exception of the *Museum Pio-Clementinum*, in such a state of degradation that they are scarcely fit for any thing but to mark the place which each composition has to occupy.

Since 1789, the department of prints has made several acquisitions deserving of notice, such as the works of LEBAS, MARCENAY, and RODE, all extremely difficult to find complete, and three hundred and seventeen plates sent from Germany by FRAUENHOTZ; most of them executed by foreign engravers, and some are very capital.

A few well-known distinguished artists and amateurs, among whom I must not omit to name DENON, ST. AUBIN, and LAMOTTE, a merchant at Havre, have generously enriched the department of prints with a great number of very valuable ones.

The library is open every day, Sundays, and days of national fêtes excepted, from ten o'clock till two, to persons who wish to read, study, or take notes; and for whom every accommodation is provided; but to such as are attracted by curiosity alone, on the Wednesdays and Fridays of each week, at the same hours. On those days, you may perambulate in the different rooms of this magnificent establishment; on the other days, walking is here prohibited, in order that students may not be interrupted. However, JOHN BULL seems to pay little regard to this prohibition. Englishmen are frequently seen stalking about the rooms at the forbidden time, as if they meant to shew that they disdained the rules of propriety and decorum*.

Under the government which succeeded the monarchy, was established, within the precincts of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, a

SCHOOL FOR ORIENTAL LIVING LANGUAGES.

The design of this school, *which is of acknowledged utility in politics and commerce*, is to qualify persons to supply the place of the French droguemans in the East, who, at the beginning

* It is the intention of the government to remove the *Bibliothèque Nationale* to the *Louvre*, or *Palais National des Sciences & des Arts*, as soon as apartments can be prepared for its reception.

of the troubles which distracted France, abandoned the interests of their country, and deserted their stations.

Langlès, president of this school, here teaches the Persian and Malay languages.

Silvestre de Sacy, literal and vulgar Arabic.

Jaubert, Turkish and the Tartarian of the Crimea.

Danse de Villoison, modern Greek.

In general, very few pupils are instructed here, and the greater part of those who begin the courses of lectures, do not follow them three months. This fact I gathered from the professors themselves. When François de Neufchâteau was Minister, he had attached to this school an Armenian, named Cirbied, who gave lessons in his native language, which are now discontinued.

A course of archœology is also delivered here by the learned Millin. The object of this course is to explain antique monuments, and compare them with passages of the classics. The professor indicates respecting each monument the opinions of the different learned men who have spoken of it: he also discusses those opinions, and endeavours to establish that which deserves to be adopted. Every year he treats on different subjects. The courses which he has already delivered, related to the study

of medals, and that of engraved stones; the explanation of the ancient monuments still existing in Spain, France, and England; the history of ancient and modern Egypt; sacred and heroic mythology, under which head he introduces an explanation of almost every monument of literature and art deserving to be known.

LETTER LXIV.

Paris, February 8, 1803.

Having complied with your desire in regard to the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, I shall confine myself to a hasty sketch of the other principal public libraries, beginning with the

BIBLIOTHÈQUE MAZARINE.

By his will, dated the 6th of March 1662, Cardinal MAZARIN bequeathed this library for the convenience of the literati. It was formed by GABRIEL NAUDÉ of every thing that could be found most rare and curious, as well in France as in foreign countries. It occupies one of the pavilions and other apartments of the *ci-devant Collège Mazarin ou des Quatre Nations*, at present called *Palais des Beaux Arts*.

No valuable additions have been made to this library since the revolution; but it is kept

in excellent order. The Conservators, LE BLOND, COQUILLE, and PALISSOT, whose complaisance is never tired, are well known in the Republic of Letters. It is open to the public every day, from ten o'clock to two, Sundays, Thursdays, and the days of national fêtes excepted.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE DU PANTHÉON.

Next to the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, this library is said to contain the most printed books and manuscripts, which are valuable on account of their antiquity, scarceness, and preservation. It formerly bore the title of *Bibliothèque de St. Geneviève*, and belonged to the Canons of that order, who had enriched it in a particular manner. The acquisitions it has made since the revolution are not sufficiently important to deserve to be mentioned. With the exception of the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, not one of the public libraries in Paris has enjoyed the advantage of making improvements and additions. The library of the *Pantheon* is open to the public on the same days as the *Bibliothèque Mazarine*.

The present Conservators are DAUNOU, VENTENAT, and VIALLON. The first two are members of the National Institute.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE DE L'ARSENAL.

This library, one of the richest in Paris,

formerly belonged to the Count d'Artois. It is destined for the *Conservative Senate*, in whose palace a place is preparing for its reception. However, it is thought that this removal cannot take place in less than a year and a half or two years. It has acquired little since the revolution, and is frequented less than the other libraries, because it is rather remote from the fashionable quarters of the town. There are few inquisitive persons in the vicinity of the Arsenal; and indeed, this library is open only on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays of every week from ten o'clock till two. AMEILHON, of the Institute, is Administrator; and SAUGRAIN, Conservator.

Before I quit this library, you will, doubtless, expect me to say something of the place from which it derives its appellation; namely,

THE ARSENAL.

It is a pile of building, forming several courts between the *Quai des Célestins* and the *Place de la Liberté*, formerly the *Place de la Bastille*. Charles V had here erected some storehouses for artillery, which were lent very unwillingly by the Provost of Paris to Francis I, who wanted them for the purpose of casting cannon. As was foreseen, the king kept possession of them, and converted them into a

royal residence. On the 28th of January 1562, lightning fell on one of the towers, then used as a magazine, and set fire to fifteen or twenty thousand barrels of powder. Several lives were lost, and another effect of this explosion was that it killed all the fishes in the river. Charles IX, Henry III, and Henry IV rebuilt the Arsenal, and augmented it considerably. Before the revolution, the founderies served for casting bronze figures for the embellishment of the royal gardens. The Arsenal then contained only a few rusty muskets and some mortars unfit for service, notwithstanding the energetic inscription which decorated the gate on the *Quai des Célestins:*

> " *Ætnæ hæc Henrico Vulcania tela ministrat,*
> " *Tela gigantæos debellatura furores.*"

Nicolas Bourbon was the author of these harmonious lines, which so much excited the jealousy of the famous poet, Santeuil, that he exclaimed in his enthusiasm, " I would " have wished to have made them, and been " hanged."

During the course of the revolution, the buildings of the Arsenal have been appropriated to various purposes: at present even they seem to have no fixed destination. Here is a garden, advantageously situated, which affords to the

inhabitants of this quarter an agreeable promenade.

The before-mentioned libraries are the most considerable in Paris; but the *National Institute*, the *Conservative Senate*, the *Legislative Body*, and the *Tribunate*, have each their respective library, as well as the *Polytechnic School*, the *Council of the School of Mines*, the *Tribunal of Cassation*, the *Conservatory of Music*, the *Museum of Natural History*, &c.

Independently of these libraries, here are also three literary *dépôts* or repositories, which were destined to supply the public libraries already formed or to be formed, particularly those appropriated to public instruction. When the Constituent Assembly decreed the possessions of the clergy to be national property, the *Committee of Alienation* fixed on the monasteries of the *Capucins*, *Grands Jésuites*, and *Cordeliers*, in Paris, as *dépôts* for the books and manuscripts, which they were desirous to save from revolutionary destruction.

LETTER LXV.

Paris, February 9, 1802.

Vive la danse! Vive la danse! seems now to prevail here universally over "*Vive l'amour!*

"*Vive la bagatelle!*" which was the rage in the time of La Fleur. I have already informed you that, in moments the most eventful, the inhabitants of this capital spent the greater part of their time in

DANCING.

However extraordinary the fact may appear, it is no less true. When the Prussians were at Châlons, the Austrians at Valenciennes, and Robespierre in the Convention, they danced. When the young conscripts were in momentary expectation of quitting their parents, their friends, and their mistresses to join the armies, they danced. Can we then wonder that, at the present hour, when the din of arms is no longer heard, and the toils of war are on the point of being succeeded by the mercantile speculations of peace, dancing should still be the favourite pursuit of the Parisians?

This is so much the case, that the walls of the metropolis are constantly covered by advertisements in various colours, blue, red, green, and yellow, announcing balls of different descriptions. The silence of streets the least frequented is interrupted by the shrill scraping of the itinerant fiddler; while by-corners, which might vie with Erebus itself in darkness, are lighted by transparencies, exhibiting, in large

characters, the words "*Bal de Société.*"—"Happy people!" says Sterne, "who can lay "down all your cares together, and dance and "sing and sport away the weights of griev-"ance, which bow down the spirit of other "nations to the earth!"

In summer, people dance here in rural gardens, or delightful bowers, or under marquees, or in temporary buildings, representing picturesque cottages, constructed within the limits of the capital: these establishments, which are rather of recent date, are open only in that gay season.

In winter, the upper classes assemble in magnificent apartments, where subscription-balls are given; and taste and luxury conspire to produce elegant entertainments.

However, it is not to the upper circles alone that this amusement is confined; it is here pursued, and with truer ardour too, by citizens of every class and description. An Englishman might probably be at a loss to conceive this truth; I shall therefore enumerate the different gradations of the scale from the report of an impartial eye-witness, partly corroborated by my own observation.

Tradesmen dance with their neighbours, at the residence of those who have the best apartments: and the expense of catgut, rosin, &c. is paid by the profits of the card-table.

Young clerks in office and others, go to public balls, where the *cavalier* pays thirty *sous* for admission; thither they escort milliners and mantua-makers of the elegant class, and, in general, the first-rate order of those engaging belles, known here by the generic name of *grisettes*.

Jewellers' apprentices, ladies' hair-dressers, journeymen tailors and upholsterers dance, at twenty *sous* a head, with sempstresses and ladies' maids.

Journeymen shoemakers, cabinet-makers, and workmen of other trades, not very laborious, assemble in *guingettes*, where they dance French country-dances at three *sous* a ticket, with *grisettes* of an inferior order.

Locksmiths, carpenters, and joiners dance at two *sous* a ticket, with women who constantly frequent the *guinguettes*, a species of dancing-girls, whom the tavern-keepers hire for the day, as they do the fiddlers.

Water-carriers, porters, and, in general, the Swiss and Auvergnats have their private balls, where they execute the dances peculiar to their country, with fruit-girls, stocking-menders, &c.

The porters of the corn-market form assemblies in their own neighbourhood; but the youngest only go thither, with a few *bons vivans*, whose profession it would be no easy matter to determine. Bucksome damsels, proof

against every thing, keep them in countenance, either in drinking brandy or in fighting, and not unfrequently at the same *bal de société*, all this goes on at the same time, and, as it were, in unison.

Those among the porters of the corn-market and charcoal carriers, who have a little *manners*, assemble on holidays, in public-houses of a more decent description, with good, plain-spoken market-women, and nosegay-girls. They drink unmixed liquor, and the conversation is somewhat more than *free*; but, in public, they get tipsy, and nothing farther!

Masons, paviours in wooden shoes, tipped with iron, and other hard-working men, in short, repair to *guingettes*, and make the very earth tremble with their heavy, but picturesque capers, forming groups worthy of the pencil of Teniers.

Lastly, one more link completes the chain of this nomenclature of caperers. Beggars, sturdy, or decrepit, dance, as well as their credulous betters: they not only dance, but drink to excess; and their orgies are more noisy, more prolonged, and even more expensive. The mendicant, who was apparently lame in the day, at night lays aside his crutch, and resumes his natural activity; the idle vagabond, who concealed one arm, now produces both; while the wretch whose wound

excited both horror and pity, covers for a time the large blister by which he makes a very comfortable living.

LETTER LXVI.

Paris, February 11, 1802.

In order to confer handsome pensions on the men of science who had benefited mankind by their labours, and who, under the old *régime*, were poorly rewarded, in 1795, Lakanal solicited and obtained the establishment of the

BUREAU DES LONGITUDES.

As members of this Board of Longitude, the first institution of the kind in France, Lagrange, Laplace, Lalande, Cassini,* Méchain, Borda,* Bougainville, Fleurieu, Messier, Buache, and Carroché, the optician, had each 8,000 francs (*circa £.* 330 sterling) a year, and the assistant astronomers, 4,000. Indeed, the professors of that science were in want of pecuniary assistance for the purpose of forming pupils.

* Since dead. The former is replaced by Delambre. Chabert and Prony are elected supernumerary members, and Lefrançais Lalande, Bouvard, and Burckhardt, appointed assistant astronomers.

The *Bureau des Longitudes* is on a more extensive scale, and possesses greater authority than the Board of Longitude in England. It is charged with the administration of all the Observatories belonging to the Republic, as well as with the correspondence with the astronomers of foreign countries. The government refers to it the examination of memoirs relative to navigation. Such of its members as more specially cultivate practical astronomy in the National Observatories of the capital, are charged to make all Observations which may contribute to the progress of that science, and procure new means for rectifying the tables of the Sun, as well as those which make known the position of the stars, and particularly the tables of the Moon, the improvement of which so essentially concerns the safety of navigation.

The great importance of the last-mentioned tables induced this Board, about three years ago, to propose a premium of 6,000 francs (*circa* £.250 sterling) for tables of the Moon. LALANDE recommended to BONAPARTE to double it. The First Consul took his advice: and the French now have tables that greatly surpass those which are used in England.* A copy of these have, I understand, been sent to Mr.

* The Prize has been awarded to M. BURG, an astronomer at Vienna.

MASKELYNE, our Astronomer-Royal at Greenwich.

The Board of Longitude of France, like that of England, calculates for every year Tables or *Ephemerides*, known in Europe under the title of *Connaissance des Tems*. The French having at length procured able calculators, are now able to dispense with the English *Ephemeris*. Their observations follow each other in such a manner as to render it unnecessary for them to recur to those of Greenwich, of which they have hitherto made continual use. Since the year 1795, the *Connaissance des Tems* has been compiled by JÉROME LALANDE. At the end of the tables and their explanation, it contains a collection of observations, memoirs, and important calculations. The French astronomers are not a little surprised that we publish no similar work in London; while Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Gotha, and Milan set us the example. It is in the last volumes of the *Connaissance des Tems* that JÉROME LALANDE gives the history of astronomy, where you will find every thing that has been done in this science.

The *Bureau des Longitudes* also publishes for every year, in advance, the *Annuaire de la République*, which serves as a rule for all the almanacks compiled in France. The meetings of the Board are held at the

NATIONAL OBSERVATORY.

This edifice, which is situated at the farther end of the *Faubourg St. Jacques,* was constructed in 1664, by order of COLBERT, and under the direction of PERRAULT, the medical architect, who planned the celebrated façade of the *Louvre.*

The form of the building is rectangular. Neither wood nor iron have been employed in its construction. It is arched throughout, and its four sides stand exactly in the direction of the four cardinal points of the horizon. Although its elevation is eighty-five feet, it comprises but two stories, terminated by a flat roof, whence you command a fine view of Paris. You ascend thither by a winding staircase which has a hollow newel. This staircase, consisting of three hundred and sixty steps, extends downward to a similar depth of eighty-five feet, and forms a sort of well, at the bottom of which you can perceive the light. From this well have been observed the different degrees of acceleration in the deseent of bodies.

The subterraneous vaults have served for meteorological experiments. In one of them water is seen to petrify on filtering through the rock above. They lead to near fifty streets or passages, formed by quarries excavated in procuring

the stones with which great part of the city of Paris is constructed.

Previously to the year 1777, churches, palaces, whole streets of houses, and the public highway of several quarters of Paris and its environs, were on the point of being swallowed up in gulfs no less vast in depth than in extent. Since then, considerable works have been undertaken to consolidate these subterraneous caverns, and fill up the void, equally dangerous, occasioned by the working of the plaster-quarries.

An accident of a very alarming nature, which happened in the *Rue d'Enfer* in the year 1774; and another, at Montmenil, in 1778, shewed the necessity of expediting these operations, which were followed up with great activity from 1777 to 1789, when their progress was relaxed from the circumstances of the times. These quarries are far more extensive than is commonly imagined. In the department of the Seine alone, they extend under all the south part of Paris, and the roads, plains, and *communes*, to the distance of several leagues round the circumference of this city. Their roof, with the edifices standing on the soil that covers it, is either supported by walls recently built under the foundation of those edifices, or by pillars constructed

at different periods in several places. The government is at the expense of providing for the safety of the streets, highways, and public buildings, but that of propping under-ground all private habitations must be defrayed by the proprietor. These ancient quarries had been much neglected, and the means of visiting them was equally dangerous and inconvenient. At present, every precaution is taken to insure the safety of the persons employed in them, as well as the stability of their roof; and for the better superintendance of all the subterraneous constructions of Paris, galleries of communication have been formed of sufficient width to admit the free passage of materials necessary for keeping them in repair.

Let us now find our way out of these labyrinths, and reascending to the surface of the soil, pursue our examination of the Observatory.

In a large room on the first floor is traced the meridian line, which divides this building into two parts. Thence, being extended to the south and north, it crosses France from Colieure to Dunkirk.

On the pavement of one of the rooms is engraved a universal circular map by CHAZELLES and SÉDILLAN. Another room is called the *Salle aux secrets*, because on applying the mouth to the groove of a pilaster, and whispering, a

person placed at the opposite pilaster hears what is said, while those in the middle of the room, hear nothing. This phenomenon, the cause of which has been so often explained, must be common to all buildings constructed in this manner.

In speaking of the *Champ de Mars*, I mentioned that LALANDE obtained the construction of an Observatory at the *ci-devant École Militaire*. Since 1789, he and his nephew have discovered fifty thousand stars; an immense labour, the greater part of them being telescopic and invisible to the naked eye. Of this number, he has already classed thirty thousand.

The CASSINIS had neglected the Observatory in Paris; but when LALANDE was director of this establishment, he obtained from BONAPARTE good instruments of every description and of the largest dimensions. These have been executed by the first artists, who, with the greatest intelligence, have put in practice all the means of improvement which we owe to the fortunate discoveries of the eighteenth century. Of course, it is now as well provided as that of Greenwich. MÉCHAIN, the present director, and BOUVARD, his associate, are extremely assiduous in their astronomical labours.

CARROCHÉ has made for this Observatory a twenty-two feet telescope, which rivals those of HERSCHEL of the same length; and the use of re-

flecting circles, imagined by MAYER, and brought into use by BORDA, which LENOIR executes in a superior manner, and which we have not yet chosen to adopt in England, has introduced into the observations of the French an accuracy hitherto unknown. The meridian from Dunkirk to Barcelona, measured between the years 1792 and 1798, by DELAMBRE and MÉCHAIN, is of an astonishing exactness. It has brought to light the irregularity of the degrees, which was not suspected. The rules, composed of platina and copper, which LAVOISIER and BORDA imagined for measuring bases, without having occasion to calculate the effect of dilatation, are a singular invention, and greatly surpass what RAMSDEN made for the bases measured in England.

LAPLACE has discovered in the Moon inequalities with which we were not acquainted. The work he has published, under the title of *Mécanique Céleste*, contains the most astonishing discoveries of physical theory, the great inequality of Jupiter and Saturn, the acceleration of the Moon, the equation of the third Satellite of Jupiter, and the flux and reflux of the sea.

BURCKHARDT, one of the associated members of the *Bureau des Longitudes*, is a first-rate astronomer and a man of superior talent. He is at present employed on the difficult task of calculating the very considerable de-

rangements of the planet discovered by OLBERS at Bremen, on the 28th of March 1801.

VIDAL has made, at Mirepoix, more observations of Mercury than all the astronomers for two thousand years past, and these are the most difficult and uncommon.

DELAMBRE has computed tables of the Sun, of Jupiter, of Saturn, and of Herschel; LALANDE, the nephew, has composed tables of Mars; and his uncle, of Mercury, which never deviate more than a few seconds from the observations.

Even during the reign of terror, astronomy was not neglected. Through the interest of CARNOT, CALON, LAKANAL, and FOURCROY, the *Bureau de Consultation des Arts* gave annually the sum of 300,000 francs (*circa* £12,000 sterling) in gratifications to artists.

Afterwards, in 1796, the National Institute, richly endowed, proposed considerable premiums. LALANDE, the uncle, founded one for astronomy; BONAPARTE, another for physics; and the First Consul has promised 60,000 francs (*circa* £2,800 sterling) to any one who shall make a discovery of importance.

France can now boast of two young geometricians, BIOT and PUISSON, who, for analytical genius, surpass all that exist in Europe. It is rather extraordinary that, with the excep-

tion of Mr. CAVENDISH and Dr. WARING, England has produced no great geometricians since the death of MACLAURIN, STERLING, and SIMPSON.

The French tables of Logarithms, printed stereotypically, are cleared of all the errors which afflicted calculators of every country. Those of other nations will owe this obligation to Frenchmen.

HERSCHEL no longer looks for comets; but the French astronomers, MESSIER, MÉCHAIN, BOUVARD, and PONS find some. Last year, JÉROME LALANDE deposited 600 francs in the hands of his notary, as a premium to stimulate the efforts of young observers.

February 11, *in continuation.*

In the spring of 1803, MÉCHAIN will leave Paris for the purpose of extending his meridian to the Balearic Islands. He will measure the length of the pendulum in several places, in order to ascertain the inequality of the earth which the measure of the degrees had indicated. This circumstance reminds me of my neglect in not having yet satisfied your desire to have a short account of the means employed for fixing the standard of the

NEW FRENCH WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

Among the great ideas realized during the first period of the revolution, must be reckoned that of a uniform system of weights and measures. From all parts of France remonstrances were sent against the great variety of those in use. Several kings had endeavoured to remedy this evil, which was so hurtful to lawful trade, and favourable only to fraud and double-dealing. Yet what even *they* had not been able to effect, was undertaken by the Constituent Assembly. It declared that there ought to be but one standard of weights and measures, in a country subject to the same laws. The *Academy of Sciences* was charged to seek and present the best mode of carrying this decree into execution. That society proposed the adoption of the decimal division, by taking for a fundamental unit the ten-millionth part of the quarter of the terrestrial meridian. The motives which determined this choice were the extreme simplicity of decimal calculation, and the advantage of having a measure taken from nature. The latter condition would, in truth, have been accomplished, had there been taken, as a fundamental unit, the length of the pendulum marking se-

conds for a given latitude; but the measure of an arc of the meridian, executed with the precision to be obtained by the methods and instruments of the present day, was extremely interesting in regard to the theory of the figure of the earth. This influenced the decision of the Academy, and if the motives which it presented to the Constituent Assembly were not exactly the real ones, it is because the sciences have also their policy: it sometimes happens that to serve mankind, one must resolve to deceive them.

All the measures of the metrical system, adopted by the Republic, are deduced from a base taken from nature, the fourth part of the terrestrial meridian; and the divisions of those measures are all subjected to the decimal order employed in arithmetic.

In order to establish this base, the grand and important work of taking a new measure of the terrestrial meridian, from Dunkirk to Barcelona, was begun in 1792. At the expiration of seven years, it was terminated; and the Institute presented the result to the Legislative Body with the original table of the new measures.

Méchain and Delambre measured the angles of ninety triangles with the new reflecting circles, imagined by Mayer, and which Borda had caused to be constructed. With these instru-

ments, they made four observations of latitude at Dunkirk, Paris, Évaux, Carcassonne, and Barcelona; two bases measured near Melun and Perpignan, with rules of platina and copper, forming metallic thermometers, were connected with the triangles of the meridian line: the total interval, which was 9°.6738, was found to be 551584.72 toises. As the degrees progressively diminished towards the south, but much more towards the middle than towards the extremities, the middle of the whole arc was taken; and, on comparing it with the degrees measured at Peru, between the years 1737 and 1741, the ellipticity of the earth was concluded to be $\frac{1}{334}$; the mean degree, 57008 toises; and the MÈTRE, which is the ten-millionth part of the quarter of the meridian, 443.296 lines of the old French toise which had been used at Peru.

The Commissioners, sent from foreign countries, verified all the calculations, and sanctioned the results. The experiments of the pendulum made at the observatory, with extreme care, by BORDA, MÉCHAIN, and CASSINI, with a new apparatus, constructed by LENOIR, shewed the pendulum to be 0.99385 of the *mètre*, on reducing it to the freezing point and in *vacuo*: this would be sufficient for finding again the *mètre*, though all the standards were changed or lost.

Exact experiments, made by LEFÈVRE-GINEAU, with instruments constructed by FORTIN, shewed the weight of the cubic decimetre of distilled water, at the point of the greatest condensation to be 18827.15 grains of the pile of 50 marcs, which is preserved here in the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, and is called *Le poids de Charlemagne*; the toise being supposed at 13 degrees of the thermometer of 80 degrees. The scales of FORTIN might give a millionth part and more; and LEFÈVRE-GINEAU employed in all these experiments and calculations the most scrupulous degree of exactness.

Thus the MÈTRE or principal unit of the French linear measures has furnished those of the weights; and all this grand system, taken from nature, is connected with the base the most invariable, the size of the earth itself.

The unit of the measures of capacity is a cube whose side is the tenth part of the *mètre*, to which has been given the name of LITRE; the unit of measures of solidity, relative to wood, a cube whose side is the *mètre*, which is called STÈRE. In short, the thousandth part of a *litre* of distilled water, weighed in *vacuo*, and at the temperature of melting ice, has been chosen for the unit of weights, which is called GRAMME.

The following TABLE presents the nomenclature of these different Measures, their divisions, and multiples, together with the new Weights, as decreed by the Legislative Body, and to it is annexed their correspondence both with the old French Measures and Weights, and those of England.

Linear Measures.

		French. Toises.	Feet.	Inches.	Lines.	English. Miles.	F.	Y.	Ft.	Inches.
Myriamètre (or League)	10,000 *Mètres*	5,130	4	5	3.360	6	1	156	0	6
Kilomètre (or Mile)	1,000 ———	513	0	5	3.936	–	4	213	1	10.2
Hectomètre	100 ———	51	1	10	1.583	–	–	109	1	1
Décamètre (or Perch)	10 ———	5	0	9	4.959	–	–	10	2	9.7
Metre		–	3	0	11.296	–	–	——	3	3.371
Décimètre (or Palm)	10th of a *Mètre*	–	–	3	8.330	–	–	——	–	3.937
Centimètre (or Digit)	100th ———	–	–	–	4.433	–	–	——	–	0.393
Millimètre (or *Trait*)	1,000th ———	–	–	–	0.443	–	–	——	–	0.039

Agrarian Measures.

		Acres.	Roods.	Perches.
Myriare, square *Kilomètre*	263244.93 square toises	247	0	20
Kilare	26324.49 ———	24	2	34
Hectare, (or *Arpent*) square *Hectomètre*	2632.45 ———	2	1	35.4
Décare	263.24 ———			39.54
Are, (or square Perch) square *Dècamètre*	26.32 ———			3.954
Déciare	2.63 ———			.395
Centiare, (or 100th part of a square Perch) square *Mètre*	0.26 ———			.039

Measures of Capacity.

			Cubic Inches.
Kilolitre, (or Hogshead) cubic *Mètre*	29.1739	cubic feet	61028
Hectolitre, (or *Setier*)	2.9174	———	6102.8
Décalitre, (or Bushel)	0.2917	———	610.28
Litre, (or *Pinte*) cubic *Décimètre*	50.4124	cubic inches	61.028
Décilitre, (or Glass)	5.0412	———	6.1028
Centilitre	0.5041	———	.6102
Millitre, cubic *Centimètre*	0.0504	———	.061

N. B. A *Litre* is nearly equal to $2\frac{1}{8}$ Pints, English Wine Measure.

Measures for Wood.

			Cubic Feet.
Stère, cubical *Mètre*	29.1739	cubic feet	35.3171
Décistère, (or *Solive*)	2.9174	———	3.5317
Centistère	0.2917	———	.3531
Millistère, cubic *Décimètre*	0.0291	———	.0353

WEIGHTS.

					Troy.			
	lbs.	oz.	drms.	grains.	lbs.	oz.	dwts.	grains.
Myriagramme	20	6	6	63.5	26	9	15	0.23
Kilogramme, (or Pound) weight of the cubic *Décimètre* of water at 4°. which is the *maximum* of density	2	0	5	35.15	2	8	3	12.02
Hectogramme, (or Ounce)		3	2	10.72		3	4	8.40
Décagramme, (or Drachm)			2	44.27			6	10.44
Gramme, (or *Denier*) weight of the cubic *Centimètre* at the freezing point				18.827				15.444
Décigramme, (or Grain)				1.883				1.544
Centigramme				0.188				.154
Milligramme, weight of the cubic *Millimètre* of water				0.019				.015

LETTER LXVII.

Paris, February 14, 1802.

After speaking of the *Board of Longitude* and the *National Observatory*, I must not omit to say a few words of an establishment much wanted in England. I mean the

DÉPÔT DE LA MARINE.

This general repository of maps, charts, plans, journals, and archives of the Navy and the Colonies, is under the direction of a flag-officer. It is situated in the *Rue de la Place Vendôme*; but the archives are still kept in an office at Versailles. To this *Dépôt* are attached the Hydrographer and Astronomer of the Navy, both members of the National Institute and of the Board of Longitude, and also a number of engineers and draughtsmen proportioned to the works which the government orders to be executed.

The title of this *Dépôt* sufficiently indicates what it contains. To it have been lately added a library, composed of all the works relative to navigation, hydrography, naval architecture, and to the navy in general, as well as of all the voyages published in the different dead or living languages. The collection of maps, charts, plans,

&c. belonging to it, is composed of originals in manuscript, ancient and modern, of French or foreign sea-charts, published at different times, and of maps of the possessions beyond the seas belonging to the maritime states of Europe and to the United-States of America.

All the commanders of vessels belonging to the State are bound, on their return to port, to address to the Minister of the Naval Department, in order to be deposited in the archives, the journals of their voyage, and the astronomical or other observations which they have been enabled to make, and the charts and plans which they have had an opportunity of constructing.

One of the apartments of the *Dépôt* contains models of ships of war and other vessels, the series of which shews the progress of naval architecture for two centuries past, and the models of the different machines employed in the ports for the various operations relative to building, equipping, repairing, and keeping in order ships and vessels of war.

The *Dépôt de la Marine* publishes new sea-charts in proportion as new observations or discoveries indicate the necessity of suppressing or rectifying the old ones.

When the service requires it, the engineers belonging to the *Dépôt* are detached to verify parts of the coasts of the French territory in

Europe, or in any other part of the world, where experience has proved that time has introduced changes with which it is important to be acquainted, or to rectify the charts of other parts that had not yet been surveyed with the degree of exactness of which the methods now known and practised have rendered such works susceptible.

In the French navy, commanders of ships and vessels are supplied with useful charts and atlases of every description, at the expense of the nation. These are delivered into their care previously to the ship leaving port. When a captain is superseded in his command, he transfers them to his successor; and when the ship is put out of commission, they are returned to the proper office. Why does not the British government follow an example so justly deserving of imitation?

LETTER LXVIII.

Paris, February 15, 1802.

After the beautiful theatre of the old *Comédie Française*, under its new title of *l'Odéon*, became a prey to flames, as I have before mentioned, the comedians belonging it were dispersed on all sides. At length, Picard assembled a part of them in a house, built at the

beginning of the revolution, which, from the name of the street where it is situated, is called the

THÉÂTRE LOUVOIS.

No colonnade, no exterior decoration announces it as a place of public amusement, and any one might pass it at noon-day without suspecting the circumstance, but for the prices of admission being painted in large characters over the apertures in the wall, where the public deposit their money.

This house, which is of a circular form, is divided, into four tiers of boxes. The ornaments in front of them, not being in glaring colours, give, by their pale tint, a striking brilliancy to the dress of the women.

Picard, the manager of this theatre, is the Molière of his company; that is, he is at once author and actor, and, in both lines, indefatigable. Undoubtedly, the most striking, and, some say, the only resemblance he bears to the mirror of French comedy, is to be compelled to bring on the stage pieces in so unfinished a state as to be little more than sketches, or, in other words, he is forced to write in order to subsist his company. Thus then, the stock-pieces of this theatre are all of them of his own composition. The greater part are *imbroglios* bordering on farce. The *vis comica* to be found

in them is not easily understood by foreigners, since it chiefly consists in allusions to local circumstances and sayings of the day. However, they sometimes produce laughter in a surprising degree, but more frequently make those laugh who never blush to laugh at any thing.

The most lively of his pieces are *Le Collatéral* and *la Petite Ville*. In the course of last month, he produced one under the name of *La Grande Ville, ou les Provinciaux à Paris*, which occasioned a violent uproar. The characters of this pseudo-comedy are swindlers or fools; and the spectators insisted that the portraits were either too exact a copy of the originals, or not at all like them. By means of much insolence, by means of the guard which was incautiously introduced into the pit, and which put to flight the majority of the audience, and, lastly, by means of several alterations, PICARD contrived to get his piece endured. But this triumph may probably be the signal of his ruin,* as the favour of the Parisian public, once lost, is never to be regained.

This histrionic author and manager has written some pieces of a serious cast. The principal are, *Médiocre et Rampant*, and *L'Entrée dans le Monde*. As in *La Grande Ville*, the

* The *Théâtre Louvois* is rapidly on the decline.

characters in these are also cheats or fools. Consequently, it was not difficult to conduct the plot, it would have been much more so to render it interesting. These two comedies are written in verse which might almost pass for prose.

The *Théâtre Louvois* is open to all young authors who have the ambition to write for the stage, before they have well stored their mind with the requisites. Novelties here succeed each other with astonishing rapidity. Hence, whatever success PICARD may have met with as an author, he has not been without competitors for his laurels. Out of no less than one hundred and sixty-seven pieces presented for rehearsal and read at this house, one hundred and sixty-five are said to have been refused. Of the two accepted, the one, though written forty years ago, was brought out as a new piece, and damned. However, the ill success of a piece represented here is not remarked; the fall not being great.

The friends of this theatre call it *La petite Maison de Thalie*. They take the part for the whole. It is, in fact, no more than her antichamber. As for the drawing-room of the goddess, it is no longer to be found any where in Paris.

The performers who compose PICARD's company do no injustice to his pieces. It is affirmed that this company has what is called, on the French

stage, *de l'ensemble*. With few exceptions, there is an *ensemble*, as it is very indifferent. For such an interpretation to be correct, it would be necessary for all the comedians of the *Théâtre Louvois* to have great talents, and none can be quoted.

Picard, though not unfrequently applauded, is but a sorry actor. His cast of parts is that of valets and comic characters.

Devigny performs the parts of noble fathers and foolish ones, here termed *dindons*, and grooms, called by the French *jockeis*. The remark, that he who plays every thing plays nothing, has not been unaptly applied to him. He has a defect of pronunciation which shocks even the ear of a foreigner.

Dorsan is naturally cold and stiff, and when he endeavours to repair the former of these defects, the weakness of his powers betrays him. If he speaks correctly, it is without *finesse*, and he never adds by expression to the thought of the author.

Clozel is a very handsome young man. He performs the characters of *petits-maîtres* and those of valets, which he confounds incessantly. The other actors of the *Théâtre Louvois* exempt me from naming them.

As for the actresses at this theatre, those only worthy to be mentioned are, Mademoiselle Adeline, who has a rather pretty face, and plays

not ill innocent parts; Mademoiselle BEFFROI, who is handsome, especially in male attire; and Mademoiselle MOLIÈRE, who is a very good *soubrette*. Mademoiselle LESCOT, tired of obtaining applause at the *Théâtre du Vaudeville*, wished to do the same on a larger theatre. Here, she has not even the consolation of saying

"*Tel brille au second rang, qui s'éclipse au premier.*"

Madame MOLÉ, who is enormous in bulk, is a coarse caricature, whether she performs the parts of noble mothers, or what the French call *caractères*, that is, singular characters.

The *ci-devant Comédie Italienne* in Paris partly owed its prosperity to the *Vaudeville*, which might be considered as the parent of the *Opéra-Comique*. They were united, when the *drame* being introduced with songs, had like to have annihilated them both. The *Vaudeville* was sacrificed and banished. Several years elapsed before it reappeared. This offspring of French gaiety was thought to be lost for ever; but a few authors had prepared for it an asylum under the name of

THÉÂTRE DU VAUDEVILLE.

This little theatre is situated in the *Rue de Chartres*, which faces the principal entrance of

the *Palais du Tribunat.* The interior is of a circular form, and divided into four tiers of boxes. In general, the decorations are not of the first class, but in the dresses the strictest propriety is observed.

The pieces performed at the *Vaudeville* are little comedies of the sentimental cast, a very extensive collection of portraits of French authors and of a few foreigners,* some pastoral pieces, parodies closely bordering on the last new piece represented at one of the principal theatres, charming *harlequinades*, together with a few pieces, in some of which parade and show are introduced; in others, scenes of low life and vulgarity; but the latter species is now almost abandoned.

These pieces are almost always composed in conjunction. It is by no means uncommon to see in the play-bills the names of five or six authors to a piece, in which the public applaud, perhaps, no more than three verses of a song. This association of names, however, has the advantage of saving many of them from ridicule.

The authors who chiefly devote themselves to the species of composition from which this theatre de-

* These are pieces the hero of which is a celebrated personage, such as RABELAIS, SCARRON, VOLTAIRE, ROUSSEAU, MALESHERBES, FREDERIC, king of Prussia, &c. &c.

rives its name, are BARRÉ, RADET, and DESFONTAINES, who may be considered as its founders. BOURGEUIL, DESCHAMPS, DESPREZ, and the two SÉGURS, also contribute to the success of the *Vaudeville*, together with CHAZET, JOUY, LONGCHAMPS, and some others.

In the exercise of their talents, these writers suffer no striking adventure, no interesting anecdote to escape their satirical humour; but aim the shafts of ridicule at every subject likely to afford amusement. It may therefore be conceived that this house is much frequented. No people on earth can be more fickle than the French in general, and the Parisians in particular, in the choice of their diversions. Like children, they are soon tired of the same toy, and novelty is for them the greatest attraction. Hence, the *Vaudeville*, as has been seen, presents a great variety of pieces. In general, these are by no means remarkable for the just conception of their plan. The circumstance of the moment adroitly seized, and related in some well-turned stanzas, interspersed with dialogue, is sufficient to insure the success of a new piece, especially if adapted to the abilities of the respective performers.

Among them, HENRY would shine in the parts of lovers, were he less of a *mannerist*.

JULIEN may be quoted as an excellent imitator of the beaux of the day.

VERTPRÉ excels in personating a striking character.

CARPENTIER is no bad representative of a simpleton.

CHAPELLE displays much comic talent and warmth in the character of dotards, who talk themselves out of their reason.

LAPORTE, as a speaking Harlequin, has no equal in Paris.

So much for the men: I shall now speak of the women deserving of notice.

Madame HENRY, in the parts of lovers, is to be preferred for her fine eyes, engaging countenance, elegant shape, and clear voice.

Mesdemoiselles COLOMBE and LAPORTE, who follow her in the same line of acting, are both young, and capable of improvement.

Mademoiselle DESMARES is far from being pretty; neither is she much of an actress, but she treads the stage well, and sings not amiss.

Mademoiselle BLOSSEVILLE plays chambermaids and characters of parody with tolerable success.

Mademoiselle DELILLE, however, who performs caricatures and characters where frequent disguises are assumed, is a still greater favou-

rite with the public. So much has been said of the glibness of a female tongue that many of the comparisons made on the subject are become proverbial; but nothing that I ever heard in that way can be compared to the volubility of utterance of Mademoiselle DELILLE, except the clearness of her articulation. A quick and attentive ear may catch every syllable as distinctly as if she spoke with the utmost gravity and slowness. The piece in which she exhibits this talent to great advantage, and under a rapid succession of disguises, is called *Frosine ou la dernière venue.*

Mademoiselle FLEURY makes an intelligent Columbine, not unworthy of LAPORTE.

Madame DUCHAUME represents not ill characters of duennas, country-women, &c.

Nothing can be said of the voice of the different performers of this theatre, on which account, perhaps, the orchestra is rather feeble; but still it might be better composed.

During my present visit to Paris, the *Vaudeville*, as it is commonly called, has, I think, insensibly declined. It has, however, been said that its destiny seems insured by the character of the French, and that being the first theatre to bend to the caprices of the day, it can never be out of fashion. Certainly, if satire be a good foundation, it ought to be the most

substantial dramatic establishment in Paris. It rests on public malignity, which is its main support. Hence, one might conclude that it will last as long as there is evil doing or evil saying, an absurdity to catch at, an author to parody, a tale of scandal to relate, a rogue to abuse, and, in short, as long as the chapter of accidents shall endure. At this rate, the *Vaudeville* must stand to all eternity.

Whatever may be its defects, it unquestionably exemplifies the character of the nation, so faithfully pourtrayed by Beaumarchais, in the following lines of the *vaudeville* which concludes the *Mariage de Figaro:*

" Si l'on opprime, il peste, il crie,
" Il s'agite en cent façons,
" Tout finit par des chansons." *Iis.*

LETTER LXIX.

Paris, February 17, 1802.

After having traversed the *Pont Neuf*, from the north side of the Seine, you cannot avoid noticing a handsome building to the right, situated on the *Quai de Conti*, facing the river. This is the Mint, or

HÔTEL DE LA MONNAIE.

The construction of this edifice was suggested by M. LAVERDY, Minister of State, and executed under the direction of M. ANTOINE, architect. I do not recollect any building of the kind in Europe that can be compared to it, since it far surpasses the *Zecca* at Venice.

The Abbé Terray (whose name will not be readily forgotten by the State-annuitants of his time, and for whom Voltaire, as one, said that he preserved his only tooth) when Comptroller-general of the Finances, laid the first stone of the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, in April 1771.

An avant-corps, decorated with six Ionic pillars, and supported by two wings, from the division of the façade, which is three hundred and thirty-six feet in breadth by eighty-four in elevation. It is distributed into two stories above the ground-floor. Perpendicularly to the six pillars, rise six statues, representing Peace, Commerce, Prudence, Law, Strength, and Plenty.

In this avant-corps are three arches, the centre one of which is the principal entrance of the building. The vestibule is decorated with twenty-four fluted Doric pillars, and on the right hand, is a stair-case, leading to the apartments intended for the use of the officers belonging to the Mint, and in which they hold their meetings. This stair-case is lighted by a

dome supported by sixteen fluted pillars of the Ionic order.

The whole building contains six courts: the principal court is one hundred and ten feet in depth by ninety-two in breadth. All round it are covered galleries, terminated by a circular wall alternately pierced with arches and gates.

The entrance of the hall for the money-presses is ornamented by four Doric pillars. This hall is sixty-two feet long by about forty broad, and contains nine money-presses. Above it is the hall of the sizers or persons who prepare the blank pieces for stamping. Next come the flatting-mills. Here, in a word, are all the apartments necessary for the different operations, and aptly arranged for the labours of coinage.

In the principal apartment of the avant-corps of the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*, towards the *Quai de Conti*, is the cabinet known in Paris by the name of the

MUSÉE DES MINES.

This cabinet or Museum was formed in 1778 by M. SAGE, who had then spent eighteen years in collecting minerals. When he began to employ himself on that science forty-five years ago, there existed in this country no col-

lection which could facilitate the study of mineralogy. Docimacy was scarcely known here by name. France was tributary to foreign countries thirty-seven millions of livres (*circa* £1,541,666 sterling) a year for the mineral and metallic substances which she drew from them, although she possesses them within herself. M. SAGE directed his studies and labours to the research and analysis of minerals. For twenty years he has delivered *gratis* public courses of chymistry and mineralogy. For the advancement of those sciences, he also availed himself of the favour he enjoyed with some persons at court and in the ministry, and this was certainly making a very meritorious use of it. To his care and interest is wholly due the collection of minerals placed in this building. The apartment containing it has, by some, been thought to deviate from the simple and severe style suitable to its destination, and to resemble too much the drawing-room of a fine lady. But those who have hazarded such a reproach do not consider that, at the period when this cabinet was formed, it was not useless, in order to bring the sciences into fashion, to surround them with the show of luxury and the elegance of accessory decoration. Who knows even whether that very circumstance, trifling as it may appear, has not somewhat

contributed to spread a taste for the two sciences in question among the great, and in the fashionable world?

However this may be, the arrangement of this cabinet is excellent, and, in that respect, it is worthy to serve as a model. The productions of nature are so disposed that the glazed closets and cases containing them present, as it were, an open book in which the curious and attentive observer instructs himself with the greater facility and expedition, as he can without effort examine and study perfectly every individual specimen.

The inside of the Museum is about forty-five feet in length, thirty-eight in breadth, and forty in elevation. In the middle is an amphitheatre capable of holding two hundred persons. In the circumference are glazed cabinets or closets, in which are arranged methodically and analytically almost all the substances known in mineralogy. The octagonal gallery, above the elliptical amphitheatre, contains large specimens of different minerals. To each specimen is annexed an explanatory ticket. One of the large lateral galleries presents part of the productions of the mines of France, classed according to the order of the departments where they are found. The new transversal gallery contains models of furnaces and machines em-

ployed in the working of mines. The third gallery is also destined to contain the minerals of France, the essays and results of which are deposited in a private cabinet. The galleries are decorated with tables and vases of different species of marble, porphyry, and granite, also from the mines of France, collected by SAGE. The cupola which rises above, is elegantly ornamented from the designs of ANTOINE, the architect of the building.

This Museum is open to the public every day from nine o'clock in the morning till two, and, though it has been so many years an object of curiosity, such is the care exerted in superintending it, that it has all the freshness of novelty.

In a niche, on the first landing-place of the stair-case, is the bust of M. SAGE, a tribute of gratitude paid to him by his pupils. SAGE's principal object being to naturalize in France mineralogy, docimacy, and metallurgy, he first obtained the establishment of a *Special School of Mines*, in which pupils were maintained by the State. Here, he directed their studies, and enjoyed the happiness of forming intelligent men, capable of improving the science of metallurgy, and promoting the search of ores, &c.

For a number of years past, as I have already observed, SAGE has delivered *gratis*, in this Museum, public courses of chymistry and mineralogy. He

attracts hither many auditors by the ease of his elocution, and the address, the grace even which he displays in his experiments. If all those who have attended his lectures are to be reckoned his pupils, there will be found in the number names illustrious among the *savans* of France. Unfortunately, this veteran of science has created for himself a particular system in chymistry, and this system differs from that of LAVOISIER, FOURCROY, GUYTON-MORVEAU, BERTHOLLET, CHAPTAL, &c. The sciences have also their schisms; but the real *savans* are not persecutors. Although SAGE was not of their opinion on many essential points, his adversaries always respected him as the man who had first drawn the attention of the government towards the art of mines, instigated the establishment of the first school which had existed for this important object, and been the author of several good analyses. On coming out of prison, into which he had been thrown during the reign of terror, he found this cabinet of mineralogy untouched. It would then have been easy, from motives of public utility, to unite it to the new School of Mines. But the heads of this new school had, for the most part, issued from the old one, and SAGE was dear to them from every consideration. It was from a consequence of this sentiment that SAGE, who had been a member of the *Academy of Sciences,*

not having been comprised in the list of the members of the National Institute at the time of its formation, has since been admitted into that learned body, not as a chymist indeed, but as a professor of mineralogy, a science which owes to him much of its improvement.

The new School of Mines is now abolished, and practical ones are established in the mountains, as I have before mentioned. While I am speaking of mineralogy, I shall take you to view the

CABINET DU CONSEIL DES MINES.

This cabinet of mineralogy, formed at the *Hôtel des Mines, Rue de l'Université, No.* 293, is principally intended to present a complete collection of all the riches of the soil of the French Republic, arranged in local order. A succession of glazed closets, contiguous and similar to each other, that is about six feet and a half in height by sixteen inches in depth, affords every facility of observing them with ease and convenience. On these cases the names of the departments are inscribed in alphabetical order, and the vacancies which still exist in this geographical collection, are daily filled up by specimens sent by the engineers of mines, who, being spread over the different districts they are charged to visit, employ themselves in recognizing care-

fully the mineral substances peculiar to each country, in order to submit their views to the government respecting the means of rendering them useful to commerce and to the arts.

The departmental collection, being thus arranged on the sides of the gallery, leaves vacant the middle of the apartments, which is furnished with tables covered with large glazed cases, intended for receiving systematic collections, and the most remarkable mineral substances from foreign countries, distributed in geographical order.

An apartment is specially appropriated to the systematic order adopted by HAÜY in his new treatise on mineralogy; another is reserved for the method of WERNER.

In both these oryctognostic collections, minerals of all countries are indiscriminately admitted. They are arranged by *classes*, *orders*, *genera*, *species*, and *varieties*, with the denominations adopted by the author of the method, and consequently designated by specific names in French for HAÜY's method, and in German for that of WERNER. The proximity of the two apartments where they are exhibited, affords every advantage for comparing both methods, and acquiring an exact knowledge of mineralogical synonymy. Each of the two methods contains also a geological collection of rocks and

various aggregates, classed and named after the principles which their respective authors have thought fit to adopt.

The other apartments are likewise furnished with tables covered with glazed cases, where are exhibited, in a manner very advantageous for study, the most remarkable minerals of every description from foreign countries, among which are:

1. A numerous series of minerals from Russia, such as red chromate of lead, white carbonate of lead, green phosphate of lead; native copper, green and blue carbonate of copper; gold ore from Berezof; iron ore, granitical rocks, fossil shells, in good preservation, from the banks of the Moscorika, and others in the siliceous state, jaspers, crystals of quartz, beril, &c.

2. A collection from the iron and copper mines of Sweden, as well as various crystals and rocks from the same country.

3. A very complete and diversified collection of minerals from the country of Saltzburg.

4. Another of substances procured in England, such as fluates and carbonates of lime from Derbyshire; pyrites, copper and lead ore, zinc, and tin from Cornwall.

5. A collection of tin ore, cobalt, uranite, &c. from Saxony.

6. A series of minerals from Simplon, St. Go-

thard, the Tyrol, Transylvania, as well as from Egypt and America. All these articles, without being striking from their size, and other accessory qualities to be remarked in costly specimens, incontestably present a rich fund of instruction to persons desirous of fathoming science, by multiplying the points of view under which mineral productions may be observed.

Such is the present state of the mineralogical collection of the *Conseil des Mines*, which the superintendants will, no doubt, with time and attention, bring to the highest degree of perfection. It is open to the public every Monday and Thursday: but, on the other days of the week, amateurs and students have access to it.

A few years before the revolution, France was still considered as destitute of an infinite number of mineral riches, which were thought to belong exclusively to several of the surrounding countries. Germany was quoted as a country particularly favoured, in this respect, by Nature. Yet France is crossed by mountains similar to those met with in Germany, and these mountains contain rocks of the same species as those of that country which is so rich in minerals. What has happened might therefore have been foreseen; namely, that, when intelligent men, with an experienced eye, should examine the soil of the various departments of the Re-

public, they would find in it not only substances hitherto considered as scarce, but even several of those whose existence there had not yet been suspected. Since the revolution, the following are the

Principal Mineral Substances discovered in France.

Dolomite, in the mountains of Vosges and in the Pyrenees.

Carburet of iron or *plumbago*, in the south peak of Bigorre. The same variety has been been found near Argentière, and the valley of Chamouny, department of Mont-Blanc.

A rock of the appearance of *porphyry*, with a *calcareous* base, in the same valley of Chamouny.

Tremolite or *grammatite* of HAÜY, in the same place. These two last-mentioned substances were in terminated crystals.

Red oxyd of titanium, in the same place.

New violet schorl, or *sphene* of HAÜY, (*rayonnante en goutière* of SAUSSURE) in the same place.

Crystallized sulphate of strontia, in the mines of Villefort in La Lozère, in the environs of Paris, at Bartelemont, near the *Salterns* in the department of La Meurthe.

Fibrous and crystallized sulphate of strontia, at Bouvron, near Toul.

Earthy sulphate of strontia, in the vicinity of Paris, near the forest of Montmorency, and to the north-east of it.

Onyx-agate-quartz, at Champigny, in the department of La Seine.

Avanturine-quartz, in the Deux-Sevres.

Marine bodies, imbedded in the soil, a little above the *Oule de Gavernie*.

Anthracite, and its direction determined in several departments.

Other marine bodies, at the height of upwards of 3400 *mètres* or 3683 yards, on the summit of Mont-Perdu, in the Upper Pyrenées.

Wolfram, near St. Yriex, in Upper Vienne.

Oxyd of antimony, at Allemont, in the department of L'Isère.

Chromate of iron, near Gassin, in the department of *Le Var*, at the *bastide* of the cascade.

Oxyd of uranite, at St. Simphorien de Marmagne, in the department of La Côte d'Or.

Acicular arsenical lead ore, at St. Prix, in the department of Saone and Loire. This substance was found among some piles of rubbish, near old works made for exploring a vein of lead ore, which lies at the foot of a mountain to the north-east, and at three quarters of a league from the *commune* of St. Prix.

In this country have likewise been found several varieties of new interesting forms relative

to substances already known; several important geological facts have been ascertained; and, lastly, the emerald has here been recently discovered. France already possesses eighteen of the twenty-one metallic substances known. Few countries inherit from Nature the like advantages.

With respect to the administration of the mines of France, the under-mentioned are the regulations now in force.

A council composed of three members, is charged to give to the Minister of the Interior ideas, together with their motives, respecting every thing that relates to mines. It corresponds, in the terms of the law, with all the grantees and with all persons who explore mines, salterns, and quarries. It superintends the research and extraction of all substances drawn from the bosom of the earth, and their various management. It proposes the grants, permissions, and advances to be made, and the encouragements to be given. Under its direction are the two practical schools, and twenty-five engineers of mines, nine of whom are spread over different parts of the French territory. General information relative to statistics, every thing that can concur in the formation of the mineralogical map of France and complete the collection of her minerals, and all observations and memoirs

relative to the art of mines or of the different branches of metallurgy, are addressed by the engineers to the *Conseil des Mines* at Paris.

LETTER LXX.

Paris, February 20, 1802.

HAVING fully described to you all the theatres here of the first and second rank, I shall confine myself to a rapid sketch of those which may be classed in the third order.*

THÉÂTRE MONTANSIER.

This house stands at the north-west angle of the *Palais du Tribunat.* It is of an oval form, and contains three tiers of boxes, exclusively of a large amphitheatre. Before the revolution, it bore the name of *Théâtre des Petits Comédiens du Comte de Beaujolois*, and was famous for

* The Theatre of the *Porte St. Martin* not having been open, when this letter was written, it is not here noticed. It may be considered as of the second rank. Its representations include almost every line of acting; but those for which the greatest expense is incurred are melo-drames and pieces connected with pantomime and parade. The house is the same in which the grand French opera was performed before the revolution.

the novelty of the spectacle here given. Young girls and boys represented little comedies and comic operas in the following manner. Some gesticulated on the stage; while others, placed in the side-scenes, spoke or sang their parts without being seen. It was impossible to withhold one's admiration from the perfect harmony between the motions of the one and the speaking and singing of the other. In short, this double acting was executed with such precision that few strangers detected the deception.

To these actors succeeded full-grown performers, who have since continued to play interludes of almost every description. Indeed, this theatre is the receptacle of all the nonsense imaginable; nothing is too absurd or too low for its stage. Here are collected all the trivial expressions to be met with in this great city, whether made use of in the markets, gaming-houses, taverns, or dancing-rooms.

Caroline and Brunet, or Brunet and Caroline. They are like two planets, round which move a great number of satellites, some more imperceptible than others. If to these we add Tiercelin, an actor of the grotesque species, little more is to be said. Were it not for Brunet, who makes the most of his comic humour, in playing all sorts of low characters, and

sometimes in a manner truly original, and Mademoiselle CAROLINE, whose clear, flexible, and sonorous voice injures the success of several little operas, the *Théâtre Montansier* would not be able to maintain its ground, notwithstanding the advantages of its centrical situation, and the attractions of its lobby, where the impures of the environs exhibit themselves to no small advantage, and literally carry all before them.

We now come to the theatres on the *Boulevard*, at the head of which is to be placed

L'AMBIGU COMIQUE.

This little theatre is situated on the *Boulevard du Temple*, and, of all those of the third order, has most constantly enjoyed the favour of the public. Previously to the revolution, AUDINOT drew hither crowded houses by the representation of comic operas and bad *drames* of a gigantic nature, called here *pantomimes dialoguées*. The effects of decoration and show were carried farther at this little theatre than at any other. Ghosts, hobgoblins, and devils were, in the sequel, introduced. All Paris ran to see them, till the women were terrified, and the men disgusted.

CORSE, the present manager, has of late added considerably to the attraction of the *Ambigu Comique*, by not only restoring it to what it was

in the most brilliant days of AUDINOT, but by collecting all the best actors and dancers of the *Boulevard*, and improving on the plan adopted by his predecessor. He has neglected nothing necessary for the advantageous execution of the new pieces which he has produced. The most attractive of these are *Victor*, *le Pélerin blanc*, *L'Homme à trois visages*, *Le Jugement de Salomon*, &c.

The best performers at this theatre are CORSE, the manager, TAUTIN, and Mademoiselle LEVESQUE.

In regard to all the other minor theatres, the enumeration of which I have detailed to you in a preceding letter,* I shall briefly observe that the curiosity of a stranger may be satisfied in paying each of them a single visit. Some of these *petits spectacles* are open one day, shut the next, and soon after reopened with performances of a different species. Therefore, to attempt a description of their attractions would probably be superfluous; and, indeed, the style of the pieces produced is varied according to the ideas of the speculators, the taste of the managers, or

* *See* Vol. i. Letter XXI, pages 219 and 220.

the abilities of the performers, who, if not "the "best actors in the world," are ready to play either "tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pas- "toral-comical, historical-pastoral, scene indi- "vidable, or poem unlimited."

LETTER LXXI.

Paris, February 22, 1802.

THE variety of matter which crowds itself on the mind of a man who attempts to describe this immense capital, forms such a chaos, that you will, I trust, give me credit for the assertion, when I assure you that it is not from neglect or inattention I sometimes take more time than may appear strictly necessary to comply with your wishes. Considering how deeply it involves the peace and comfort of strangers, as well as inhabitants, I am not at all surprised at the anxiety which you express to acquire some knowledge of the

POLICE OF PARIS.

In the present existing circumstances, it might be imprudent, if not dangerous, to discuss, freely

and openly, so delicate a question. I shall take a middle course. Silence would imply fear; while boldness of expression might give offence; and though I certainly am not afraid to mention the subject, yet to offend, is by no means my wish or intention. In this country, the Post-Office has often been the channel through which the opinion of individuals has been collected. What has been, may again occur; and in such critical times, who knows but the government may conceive itself justified in not considering as absolutely sacred the letters intrusted to that mode of conveyance? Under these considerations, I shall beg leave to refer you to a work which has gone through the hands of every inquisitive reader; that is the *Tableau de Paris*, published in 1788: but, on recollection, as this letter will, probably, find you in the country, where you may not have an immediate opportunity of gratifying your curiosity, and as the book is become scarce, I shall select from it for your satisfaction a few extracts concerning the Police.

This establishment is necessary and useful for maintaining order and tranquillity in a city like Paris, where the very extremes of luxury and wretchedness are continually in collision. I mean *useful*, when no abuse is made of its power; and it is to be hoped that the present govern-

ment of France is too wise and too just to convert an institution of public utility into an instrument of private oppression.

Since the machinery of the police was first put in order by M. D'Argenson, in 1697, its wheels and springs have been continually multiplied by the thirteen ministers who succeeded him in that department. The last of these was the celebrated M. Lenoir.

The present Minister of the Police, M. Fouché, has, it seems, adopted, in a great measure, the means put in practice before the revolution. His administration, according to general report, bears most resemblance to that of M. Lenoir: he is said, however, to have improved on that vigilant magistrate: but he surpasses him, I am told, more in augmentation of expenses and agents, than in real changes.*

In selecting from the before-mentioned work

* The office of Minister of the Police has since been abolished. M. Fouché is now a Senator, and the machine of which he was said to be so expert a manager, is confided to the direction of the Prefect of Police, who exercises his functions under the immediate authority of the Ministers, and corresponds with them concerning matters which relate to their respective departments. The higher duties of the Police are at present vested in the *Grand Juge*, who is also Minister of Justice. The former office is of recent creation.

the following *widely scattered* passages, and assembling them as a *piece of Mosaic*, it has been my endeavour to enable you to form an impartial judgment of the police of Paris, by exhibiting it with all its perfections and imperfections. Borrowing the language of MERCIER, I shall trace the institution through all its ramifications, and, in pointing out its effects, I shall "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice."

If we take it for granted, that the police of Paris is now exercised on the same plan as that pursued towards the close of the old *régime*, this sketch will be the more interesting, as its resemblance to the original will exempt me from adding a single stroke from my own pencil.

"D'ARGENSON was severe," says MERCIER, "perhaps because he felt, in first setting the machine in motion, a resistance which his successors have less experienced. For a long time it was imagined that a Minister of Police ought to be harsh; he ought to be firm only. Several of these magistrates have laid on too heavy a hand, because they were not acquainted with the people of Paris; a people of quick feeling, but not ferocious*, whose motions are to be divined, and consequently easy to be led. Whoever should be void of pity in that post, would be a monster."

* Voltaire thought otherwise; and he was not mistaken.

MERCIER then gives the fragment by FONTENELLE, on the police of Paris and on M. D'ARGENSON, of which I shall select only what may be necessary for elucidating the main subject.

"The inhabitants of a well-governed city," says FONTENELLE, "enjoy the good order which "is there established, without considering what "trouble it costs those who establish or pre- "serve it, much in the same manner as all "mankind enjoy the regularity of the motions "of celestial bodies, without having any know- "ledge of them, and even the more the good "order of a police resembles by its uniformity "that of the celestial bodies, the more is it "imperceptible, and, consequently, the more it "is unknown, the greater is its perfection. "But he who would wish to know it and fa- "thom it, would be terrified. To keep up "perpetually in a city, like Paris, an immense "consumption, some sources of which may "always be dried up by a variety of accidents; "to repress the tyranny of shop-keepers in re- "gard to the public, and at the same time "animate their commerce; to prevent the mu- "tual usurpations of the one over the other, "often difficult to discriminate; to distinguish "in a vast crowd all those who may easily "conceal there a hurtful industry; to purge "society of them, or tolerate them only as

" far as they can be useful to it by employ-
" ments which no others but themselves would
" undertake, or discharge so well; to keep ne-
" cessary abuses within the precise limits of ne-
" cessity which they are always ready to over-
" leap; to envelop them in the obscurity to
" which they ought to be condemned, and not
" even draw them from it by chastisement too
" notorious; to be ignorant of what it is better
" to be ignorant of than to punish, and to pu-
" nish but seldom and usefully; to penetrate
" by subterraneous avenues into the bosom of
" families, and keep for them the secrets which
" they have not confided, as long as it is not
" necessary to make use of them; to be pre-
" sent every where without being seen; in
" short, to move or stop at pleasure an immense
" multitude, and be the soul ever-acting, and
" almost unknown, of this great body: these are,
" in general, the functions of the chief ma-
" gistrate of the police. It should seem that
" one man alone could not be equal to them,
" either on account of the quantity of things
" of which he must be informed, or of that
" of the views which he must follow, or of
" the application which he must exert, or of
" the variety of conduct which he must ob-
" serve, and of the characters which he must
" assume: but the public voice will answer

" whether M. D'Argenson has been equal to " them.

" Under him, cleanliness, tranquillity, plenty, " and safety were brought to the highest de- " gree of perfection in this city. And, indeed, " the late king (Lewis XIV) relied entirely on " his care respecting Paris. He could have " given an account of a person unknown who " should have stolen into it in the dark; this " person, whatever ingenuity he exerted in " concealing himself, was always under his " eye; and if, at last, any one escaped him, at " least what produced almost the same effect, no " one would have dared to think himself well- " concealed.

" Surrounded and overwhelmed in his audi- " ences by a crowd of people chiefly of the lower " class, little informed themselves of what " brought them, warmly agitated by interests " very trifling, and frequently very ill understood, " accustomed to supply the place of discourse " by senseless clamour, he neither betrayed " the inattention nor the disdain which such " persons or such subjects might have occa- " sioned."

" Fontenelle has not," continues Mercier, " spoken of the severity of M. D'Argenson, of his inclination to punish, which was rather a sign of weakness than of strength. Alas!

human laws, imperfect and rude, cannot dive to the bottom of the human heart, and there discover the causes of the delinquencies which they have to punish! They judge only from the surface: they would acquit, perhaps, those whom they condemn; they would strike him whom they suffer to escape. But they cannot, I confess, do otherwise. Nevertheless, they ought to neglect nothing that serves to disclose the heart of man. They ought to estimate the strength of natural and indestructible passions, not in their effects, but in their principles; to pay attention to the age, the sex, the time, the day; these are nice rules, which could not be found in the brain of the legislator, but which ought to be met with in that of a Minister of the Police."

"There are also epidemical errors in which the multitude of those who go astray, seems to lessen the fault; in which a sort of circumspection is necessary, in order that punishment may not be in opposition to public interest, because punishment would then appear absurd or barbarous, and indignation might recoil on the law, as well as on the magistrate."

"What a life has a Minister of Police! He has not a moment that he can call his own; he is every day obliged to punish; he is afraid to give way to indulgence, because he does not

know that he may not one day have to reproach himself with it. He is under the necessity of being severe, and of acting contrary to the inclination of his heart; not a crime is committed but he receives the shameful or cruel account: he hears of nothing but vicious men and vices; every instant he is told: "there's a "murder! a suicide! a rape!" Not an accident happens but he must prescribe the remedy, and hastily; he has but a moment to deliberate and act, and he must be equally fearful to abuse the power intrusted to him, and not to use it opportunely. Popular rumours, flighty conversations, theatrical factions, false alarms, every thing concerns him.

"Is he gone to rest? A fire rouses him from his bed. He must be answerable for every thing; he must trace the robber, and the lurking assassin who has committed a crime; for the magistrate appears blameable, if he has not found means to deliver him up quickly to justice. The time that his agents have employed in this capture will be calculated, and his honour requires that the interval between the crime and the imprisonment should be the shortest possible. What dreadful duties! What a laborious life! And yet this place is coveted!

"On some occasions, it is necessary for the Minister of Police to demean himself like a

true *Greek*, as was the case in the following instance:

" A person, being on the point of making a journey, had in his possession a sum of twenty thousand livres which embarrassed him; he had only one servant, whom he mistrusted, and the sum was tempting. He accordingly requested a friend to be so obliging as to take care of it for him till his return.

" A fortnight after, the friend denied the circumstance. As there was no proof, the civil law could not pronounce in this affair. Recourse was had to the Minister of Police, who pondered a moment, and sent for the receiver, making the accuser retire into an adjoining room.

" The friend arrives, and maintains that he has not received the twenty thousand livres. " Well," said the magistrate, " I believe you; " and as you are innocent, you run no risk " in writing to your wife the note that I am " going to dictate. Write."

" My dear wife, all is discovered. I shall " be punished if I do not restore you know " what. Bring the sum: your coming quickly " to my relief is the only way for me to get " out of trouble and obtain my pardon."

" This note," added the magistrate, " will " fully justify you. Your wife can bring nothing

" since you have received nothing, and your ac-
" cuser will be foiled."

" The note was dispatched; the wife, terri-
fied, ran with the twenty thousand livres."

" Thus the Minister of Police can daily make up for the imperfection and tardiness of our civil laws; but he ought to use this rare and splendid privilege with extreme circumspection.

" The chief magistrate of the police is become a minister of importance; he has a secret and prodigious influence; he knows so many things, that he can do much mischief or much good, because he has in hand a multitude of threads which he can entangle or disentangle at his pleasure; he strikes or he saves; he spreads darkness or light: his authority is as delicate as it is extensive.

" The Minister of Police exercises a despotic sway over the *mouchards* who are found disobedient, or who make false reports: as for these fellows, they are of a class so vile and so base, that the authority to which they have sold themselves, has necessarily an absolute right over their persons.

" This is not the case with those who are apprehended in the name of the police; they may have committed trifling faults: they may have enemies in that crowd of *exempts*, spies, and satellites, who are believed on their word. The

eye of the magistrate may be incessantly deceived, and the punishment of these crimes ought to be submitted to a more deliberate investigation; but the house of correction ingulfs a vast number of men who there become still more perverted, and who, on coming out, are still more wicked than when they went in. Being degraded in their own eyes, they afterwards plunge themselves headlong into all sorts of irregularities.

"These different imprisonments are sometimes rendered necessary by imperious circumstances; yet it were always to be wished that the detention of a citizen should not depend on a single magistrate, but that there should be a sort of tribunal to examine when this great act of authority, withdrawn from the eye of the law, ceases to be illegal.

"A few real advantages compensate for these irregular forms, and there are, in fact, an infinite number of irregularities which the slow and grave process of our tribunals can neither take cognizance of, nor put a stop to, nor foresee, nor punish. The audacious or subtle delinquent would triumph in the winding labyrinth of our civil laws. The laws of the police, more direct, watch him, press him, and surround him mose closely. The abuse is contiguous to the benefit, I admit; but a great many private acts of violence, base and shameful crimes,

are repressed by this vigilant and active force, which ought, nevertheless, to publish its code, and submit it to the inspection of enlightened citizens."

"Could the Minister of Police communicate to the philosopher all he knows, all he learns, all he sees, and likewise impart to him certain secret things, of which he alone is well-informed, there would be nothing so curious and so instructive under the pen of the philosopher; for he would astonish all his brethren. But this magistrate is like the great penitentiary; he hears every thing, relates nothing, and is not astonished at certain delinquencies in the same degree as another man. By dint of seeing the tricks of roguery, the crimes of vice, secret treachery, and all the filth of human actions, he has necessarily a little difficulty in giving credit to the integrity and virtue of honest people. He is in a perpetual state of mistrust; and, in the main, he ought to possess such a character; for he ought to think nothing impossible, after the extraordinary lessons which he receives from men and from things. In a word, his place commands a continual and scrutinizing suspicion."

February 22, *in continuation.*

" Even should not the Parisian have the levity with which he is reproached, reason would justify him in its adoption. He walks surrounded by spies. No sooner do two citizens whisper to each other, than up comes a third, who prowls about in order to listen to what they are saying. The spies of the police are a regiment of inquisitive fellows; with this difference, that each individual belonging to this regiment has a distinct dress, which he changes frequently every day; and nothing so quick or so astonishing as these sorts of metamorphoses.

" The same spy who figures as a private gentleman in the morning, in the evening represents a priest: at one time, he is a peaceable limb of the law; at another, a swaggering bully. The next day, with a gold-headed cane in his hand, he will assume the deportment of a monied man buried in calculations; the most singular disguises are quite familiar to him. In the course of the twenty-four hours, he is an officer of distinction and a journeyman hair-dresser, a shorn apostle and a scullion. He visits the dress-ball and the lowest sink of vice. At one time with a diamond ring on his finger, at another with the most filthy wig on his head, he almost changes his countenance as he does his

apparel; and more than one of these *mouchards* would teach the French *Roscius* the art of *decomposing* himself; he is all eyes, all ears, all legs; for he trots, I know not how, over the pavement of every quarter of the town. Squatted sometimes in the corner of a coffee-room, you would take him for a dull, stupid, tiresome fellow, snoring till supper is ready: he has seen and heard all that has passed. At another time, he is an orator, and been the first to make a bold speech; he courts you to open your mind; he interprets even your silence, and whether you speak to him or not, he knows what you think of this or that proceeding.

" Such is the universal instrument employed in Paris for diving into secrets; and this is what determines the actions of persons in power more willingly than any thing that could be imagined in reasoning or politics.

" The employment of spies has destroyed the ties of confidence and friendship. None but frivolous questions are agitated, and the government dictates, as it were, to citizens the subject on which they shall speak in the evening in coffee-houses, as well as in private circles.

" The people have absolutely lost every idea of civil or political administration; and if any thing could excite laughter in the midst of an

ignorance so deplorable, it would be the conversation of such a silly fellow who constantly imagines that Paris must give the law and the *ton* to all Europe, and thence to all the world.

" The men belonging to the police are a mass of corruption which the Minister of that department divides into two parts: of the one, he makes spies or *mouchards*; of the other, satellites, *exempts*, that is, officers, whom he afterwards lets loose against pickpockets, swindlers, thieves, &c., much in the same manner as a huntsman sets hounds on wolves and foxes.

" The spies have other spies at their heels, who watch over them, and see that they do their duty. They all accuse each other reciprocally, and worry one another for the vilest gain."

I cannot here avoid interrupting my copious but laboriously-gathered selection from MERCIER, to relate an anecdote which shews in what a detestable light *mouchards* are considered in Paris.

A man who appeared to be in tolerably good circumstances, fell in love, and married a girl whom the death of her parents and accumulated distress had driven to a life of dissipation. At the end of a few months, she learnt that her husband was a spy of the police. " Probably," said she to him, " you did not take up " this trade till after you had reflected that in " following that of a thief or a murderer, you

" would have risked your life." On saying this, she ran out of the house, and precipitated herself from the *Pont Royal* into the Seine, where she was drowned.—But to resume the observations of MERCIER.

" It is from these odious dregs," continues our author, " that public order arises.

" When the *mouchards* of the police have acted contrary to their instructions, they are confined in the house of correction; but they are separated from the other prisoners, because they would be torn to pieces by those whom they have caused to be imprisoned, and who would recognize them. They inspire less pity on account of the vile trade which they follow. One sees with surprise, and with still more pain, that these fellows are very young. Spies, informers at sixteen!—O! what a shocking life does this announce!" exclaims MERCIER. " No; nothing ever distressed me more than to see boys act such a part.....And those who form them into squads, who drill them, who corrupt such inexperienced youth!"

Such is the admirable order which reigns in Paris, that a man suspected or described is watched so closely, that his smallest steps are known, till the very moment when it is expedient to apprehend him.

" The description taken of the man is a real

portrait, which it is impossible to mistake; and the art of thus describing the person by words, is carried to so great a nicety, that the best writer, after much reflection on the matter, could add nothing to it, nor make use of other expressions.

" The Theseuses of the police are on foot every night to purge the city of robbers, and it might be said that the lions, bears, and tigers are chained by political order.

" There are also the court-spies, the town-spies, the bed-spies, the street-spies, the spies of impures, and the spies of wits: they are all called by the name of *mouchards*, the family name of the first spy employed by the court of France.

" Men of fashion at this day follow the trade of *mouchards*; most of them style themselves *Monsieur le Baron, Monsieur le Comte, Monsieur le Marquis.* There was a time, under Lewis XV, when spies were so numerous, that it was impossible for friends, who assembled together, to open their heart to each other concerning matters which deeply affected their interest. The ministerial inquisition had posted its sentinels at the door of every room, and listeners in every closet. Ingenuous confidences, made from friends to friends, and intended to die in the very bosom where they had been deposited, were punished as dangerous conspiracies.

" These odious researches poisoned social life, deprived men of pleasures the most innocent, and transformed citizens into enemies who trembled to unbosom themselves to each other.

" One fourth of the servants in Paris serve as spies; and the secrets of families, which are thought the most concealed, come to the knowledge of those interested in being acquainted with them.

" Independently of the spies of the police, ministers have spies belonging to themselves, and keep them in pay: these are the most dangerous of all, because they are less suspected than others, and it is more difficult to know them. By these means, ministers know what is said of them; yet, of this they avail themselves but little. They are more intent to ruin their enemies, and thwart their adversaries, than to derive a prudent advantage from the free and ingenuous hints given them by the multitude.

" It is entertaining enough to consider that, in proper time and place, spies are watching him who, at his pleasure, sets spies to watch other citizens. Thus, the links which connect mankind in political order are really incomprehensible. He who does not admire the manner in which society exists, and is supported by the simultaneous reaction of its members, and

who sees not the serpent's *tail* entering its *mouth*, is not born for reflection.

" But the secrets of courts are not revealed through spies; they get wind by means of certain people who are not in the least mistrusted; in like manner the best built ships leak through an imperceptible chink, which cannot be discovered.

" What is interesting in courts, and particularly so in ours," says MERCIER, " is that there is a degree of obscurity spread over all its proceedings. We wish to penetrate what is concealed, we endeavour to know till we learn; thus it is that the most ingenious machine preserves its highest value only till we have seen the springs which set it in motion.

" After having considered the different parts which form the police of the capital, we still perceive all the radii reaching from the centre to the circumference. How many ramifications issue from the same stem! How far the branches extend! What an impulse does not Paris give to other neighbouring cities!

" The police of Paris has an intimate correspondence with that of Lyons and other provincial cities: for it is evident that it would be imperfect, if it could not follow the disturber of public order, and if the distance of a few leagues skreened him from researches.

" The correspondence of the Parisian police is not therefore limited to its walls; it extends much farther; and it is in towns where imprudent or rash persons would imagine that they might give their tongue greater freedom, that the vigilant magistrate pries into conversation, and keeps a watchful eye over those who would measure their audacity by the degree of distance from the capital.

" Thus the police of Paris, after having embraced France, penetrates also into Switzerland, Italy, Holland, and Germany;* and when occasion

* I shall exemplify this truth by two remarkable facts. About the year 1775, when M. DE SARTINE was Minister of the Police, several forgeries were committed on the Bank of Vienna; Count DE MERCY, then Austrian ambassador at Paris, was directed to make a formal application for the delinquent to be delivered up to justice. What was his astonishment on receiving, a few hours after, a note from M. DE SARTINE, informing him that the author of the said forgeries had never been in Paris; but resided in Vienna, at the same time mentioning the street, the number of the house, and other interesting particulars!

A circumstance which occurred in 1796, proves that, since the revolution, the system of the Parisian police continues to extend to foreign countries. The English Commissary for prisoners of war was requested by a friend to make inquiry, on his arrival in Paris, whether a French lady of the name of BEAUFORT was living, and in what part of France she resided. He did so; and the following day, the card, on which

requires, its eye is open on all sides to what can interest the government. When it wishes to know any fact, it is informed of it to a certainty; when it wishes to strike a serious blow, it seldom misses its aim.

" It may easily be conceived that the machine would be incomplete, and that its play would fail in the desired effect, did it not embrace a certain extent. It costs but little to give to the lever the necessary length. Whether the spy be kept in pay at Paris, or a hundred leagues off, the expense is the same, and the utility becomes greater.

" Experience has shewn that these observations admit of essential differences in the branches of the police. Weights and measures must be changed, according to time, place, persons, and circumstances. There are no fixed rules; they must be created at the instant, and the most versatile actions are not destitute of wisdom and reason.

" Of this wholesale legislators are not aware: it is reserved for practitioners to seize these shades of distinction. There must be a customary, and, as it were, every-day policy, in order to decide well without precipitation, without

he had written the lady's name, was returned to him, with this addition: " She lives at No. 47, East-street, Manchester-square, London."

weakness, and without rigour. What would be a serious fault at Paris, would be a simple imprudence at Lyons, an indifferent thing elsewhere, and so on reciprocally.

" Now this science has not only its details and its niceties, it has also its variations, and sometimes even its oppositions. Ministers must have a steady eye and great local experience, in order to be able to strike true, and strike opportunely, without espousing imaginary terrors; which, in matters of police, is the greatest fault that can be committed*.

" Lycurgus, Solon, Locke, and Penn! you have made very fine and majestic laws; but would you have divined these? Although secret, they exist; they have their wisdom, and even their depth. The distance of a few leagues gives to matters of police two colours, which bear to each other no resemblance; and there is no principal town which is not obliged, in modeling its police on that of Paris, to introduce into it the greatest modifications. The motto of every Minister of Police ought to be this: *The letter of the law kills, its spirit gives life.*

" The safety of Paris, during the night, is owing to the guard† and two or three hun-

* The same principle holds good in politics.

† The municipal guard of Paris at present consists of 2334 men. The privates must be above 30 and under 45 years of age.

dred *mouchards*, who trot about the streets, and recognize and follow suspected persons. It is chiefly by night that the police makes its captions."

The manner in which these captions are made is humorously, gravely, feelingly, and philosophically described by the ingenious MERCIER. Long as this letter already is, I am confident that you will not regret its being still lengthened by another extract or two relative to this interesting point; thus I shall terminate the only elucidation that you are likely to obtain on a subject which has so strongly excited your curiosity.

"The comic," says our lively author, "is here blended with the serious. The fulminating order, which is going to crush you, is in the pocket of the *exempt*, who feels a degree of pleasure in the exercise of his dreadful functions. He enjoys a secret pride in being bearer of the thunder; he fancies himself the eagle of Jove: but his motion is like that of a serpent. He glides along, dodges you, crouches before you, approaches your ear, and with down-cast eyes and a soft-toned voice, says to you, at the same time shrugging his shoulders: "*Je* "*suis au désespoir, Monsieur; mais j'ai un* "*ordre, Monsieur, qui vous arrête, Monsieur*; "*de la part de la police, Monsieur.*"——"*Moi,*

"*Monsieur?*"——"*Vous-même, Monsieur.*"—You waver an instant between anger and indignation, ready to vent all sorts of imprecations. You see only a polite, respectful, well-bred man, bowing to you, mild in his speech, and civil in his manners. Were you the most furious of mankind, your wrath would be instantly disarmed. Had you pistols, you would discharge them in the air, and never against the affable *exempt*. Presently you return him his bows: there even arises between you a contest of politeness and good breeding. It is a reciprocity of obliging words and compliments, till the moment when the resounding bolts separate you from the polite man, who goes to make a report of his mission, and whose employment, by no means an unprofitable one, is to imprison people with all possible gentleness, urbanity, and grace.

"I am walking quietly in the street; before me is a young man decently dressed. All at once four fellows seize on him, collar him, push him against the wall, and drag him away. Natural instinct commands me to go to his assistance; a tranquil witness says to me coolly: "Don't interfere; 'tis nothing, sir, but a caption "made by the police." The young man is handcuffed, and he disappears.

"I wish to enter a narrow street, a man be-

longing to the guard is posted there as a sentinel: I perceive several of the populace looking out of the windows. "What's the matter, "sir?" say I.——"Nothing," replies he; "they "are only taking up thirty girls of the town "at one cast of the net." Presently the girls, with top-knots of all colours, file off, led by the soldiers of the guard, who lead them gallantly by the hand, with their muskets clubbed.

"It is eleven o'clock at night, or five in the morning, there is a knock at your door; your servant opens it; in a moment your room is filled with a squad of satellites. The order is precise, resistance is vain; every thing that might serve as a weapon is put out of your reach; and the *exempt*, who will not, on that account, boast the less of his bravery, even takes your brass pocket-inkstand for a pistol.

"The next day, a neighbour, who has heard a noise in the house, asks what it might be: "Nothing, 'tis only a man taken up by the "police."——"What has he done?"——"No "one can tell; he has, perhaps, committed a "murder, or sold a suspicious pamphlet"—— "But, sir, there's some difference between those "two crimes."——"May be so; but he is carried "off."

"You have been apprehended; but you have not been shewn the order; you have been put

into a carriage closely shut up; you know not whither you are going to be taken; but you may be certain that you will visit the wards or dungeons of some prison.

" Whence proceeds the decree of proscription? You cannot rightly guess.

" It is not necessary to write a thick volume against arbitrary arrests. When one has said, *it is an arbitrary act*, one may, without any difficulty, infer every possible consequence. But all captions are not equally unjust: there are a multitude of secret and dangerous crimes which it would be impossible for the ordinary course of the law to take cognizance of, to put a stop to, and punish. When the minister is neither seduced nor deceived, when he yields not to private passion, to blind prepossession, to misplaced severity, his object is frequently to get rid of a disturber of the public peace; and the police, in the manner in which the machine is set up, could not proceed, at the present day, without this quick, active, and repressive power.

" It were only to be wished that there should be afterwards a particular tribunal, which should weigh in an exact scale the motives of each caption, in order that imprudence and guilt, the pen and the poniard, the book and the libel, might not be confounded.

" The inspectors of police determine on their part a great many subaltern captions; as they are generally believed on their word, and as they strike only the lowest class of the people, the chief readily concedes to them the details of this authority.

" Some yield to their peevishness; others, to their caprice: but who knows whether avarice has not also a share in their proceedings, and whether they do not often favour him who pays at the expense of him who does not pay? Thus the liberty of the distressed and lowest citizens would have a tarif; and this strange tax would bear hard on the very numerous portion of *prostitutes, professed gamblers, quacks, hawkers, swindlers,* and *adventurers,* all people who do mischief, and whom it is necessary to punish; but who do more mischief when they are obliged to pay, and purchase, during a certain time, the privilege of their irregularities.

" We have imitated from the English their Vauxhall, their Ranelagh, their whist, their punch, their hats, their horse-races, their jockies, their betting; but," concludes MERCIER, " when shall we copy from them something more important, for instance, that bulwark of liberty, the law of *habeas corpus?*"

LETTER LXXII.

Paris, February 26, 1802.

REFERRING to an expression made use of in my letter of the 16th of December last*, you ask me "What the sciences, or rather the *savans* "or men of science, have done for this people?" With the assistance of a young Professor in the *Collège de France*, who bids fair to eclipse all his competitors, it will not be difficult for me to answer your question.

Let me premise, however, that the *savans* to whom I allude, must not be confounded with the philosophers, called *Encyclopædists*, from their having been the first to conceive and execute the plan of the *Encyclopædia*. These *savans* were DIDEROT, D'ALEMBERT, and VOLTAIRE, all professed atheists, who, by the dissemination of their pernicious doctrine, introduced into France an absolute contempt for all religion. This infidelity, dissolving every social tie, every principle between man and man, between the governing and the governed, in the sequel, produced anarchy, rapine, and all their attendant horrors.

* See Vol. I. page 395.

At the beginning of the revolution, every mind being turned towards politics, the Sciences were suddenly abandoned: they could have no weight in the struggle which then occupied every imagination. Presently their existence was completely forgotten. Liberty formed the subject of every writing and every discourse: it seemed that orators alone possessed the power of serving her; and this error was partly the cause of the calamities which afterwards overwhelmed France. The greater part of the *savans* remained simple spectators of the events which were preparing: not one of them openly took part against the revolution. Some involved themselves in it. Those men were urged by great views, and hoped to find, in the renewal of social organization, a mean of applying and realizing their theories. They thought to master the revolution, and were carried away by its torrent; but at that time the most sanguine hopes were indulged. If the love of liberty be no more than a phantom of the brain, if the wish to render men better and happier be no more than a matter of doubt, such errors may be pardoned in those who have paid for them with their life.

It is in the recollection of every one that the National Convention consisted of two parties, which, under the same exterior, were hast-

ening to contrary ends: the one, composed of ignorant and ferocious men, ruled by force; the other, more enlightened, maintained its ground by address. The former, restless possessors of absolute power, and determined to grasp at every thing for preserving it, strove to annihilate the talents and knowledge which made them sensible of their humiliating inferiority. The others, holding the same language, acted in an opposite direction. But being obliged, in order to preserve their influence, never to shew themselves openly, they employed their means with an extreme reserve, and this similarity at once explains the good they did, the evil they prevented, and the calamities which they were unable to avert.

At that time, France was on the very brink of ruin. *Landrecies*, *Le Quesnoy*, *Condé*, and *Valenciennes* were in the power of her enemies. *Toulon* had been given up to the English, whose numerous fleets held the dominion of the seas, and occasionally effected debarkations. This country was a prey to famine and terror; *La Vendée*, *Lyons*, and *Marseilles* were in a state of insurrection. No arms, no powder; no ally that could or would furnish any; and its only resource lay in an anarchical government, without either plan or means of defence, and skilful only in persecution. In a word, every

thing announced that the Republic would perish, before it could enjoy a year's existence.

In this extremity, two new members were called to the Committee of Public Welfare. These two men organized the armies, conceived plans of campaign, and prepared supplies.

It was necessary to arm nine hundred thousand men; and what was most difficult, it was necessary to persuade a mistrustful people, ever ready to cry out "treason!" of the possibility of such a prodigy. For this purpose, the old manufactories were comparatively nothing; several of them, situated on the frontiers, were invaded by the enemy. They were revived every where with an activity till then unexampled. *Savans* or men of science were charged to describe and simplify the necessary proceedings. The melting of the church-bells yielded all the necessary metal*. Steel was wanting; none could be obtained from abroad, the art of making it was unknown. The *Savans* were asked to create it; they succeeded, and this part of the public defence thus became independent of foreign countries.

* The bells produced 27,442,852 pounds of metal. This article, valued at 10 *sous* per pound, represents 15 millions of francs (*circa* £625,000 sterling). A part served for the fabrication of copper coin, the remainder furnished pieces of ordnance.

The exigencies of the war had rendered more glaring the urgent necessity of having good topographical maps, and the insufficiency of those in use became every day more evident. The geographical engineers, which corps had been suppressed by the Constituent Assembly, were recalled to the armies, and although they could not, in these first moments, give to their labours the necessary extent and detail, they nevertheless paved the way to the great results since obtained in this branch of the art military. Nothing is more easy than to destroy; nothing is so difficult, and, above all, so tedious as to reconstruct.

The persons then in power had likewise had the prudence to preserve in their functions such pupils and engineers in the civil line as were of an age to come under the requisition. Whatever might be the want of defenders, it was felt that it requires ten years' study to form an engineer; while health and courage suffice for making a soldier. This disastrous period affords instances of foresight and skill which have not always been imitated in times more tranquil.

The Sciences had just rendered great services to the country. They were calumniated; those who had made use of them were compelled to defend them, and did so with courage. A cir-

cumstance, equally singular and unforeseen, occasioned complete recourse to be had to their assistance.

An officer arrived at the Committee of Public Welfare: he announced that the republican armies were in presence of the enemy; but that the French generals durst not march their soldiers to battle, because the brandies were poisoned, and that the sick in the hospitals, having drunk some, had died. He requested the Committee to cause them to be examined, asked them for orders on this subject, and wished to set off again immediately.

The most skilful chymists were instantly assembled: they were ordered to analyze the brandies, and to indicate, in the course of the day, the poison and the remedy.

These *savans* laboured without intermission, trusting only to themselves for the most minute details. Scarcely was time allowed them to finish their operations, when they were summoned to appear before the Committee of Public Welfare, over which ROBESPIERRE presided.

They announced that the brandies were not poisoned, and that water only had been added to them, in which was slate in suspension, so that it was sufficient to filter them, in order to deprive them of their hurtful quality.

ROBESPIERRE, who hoped to discover a trea-

son, asked the Commissioners if they were perfectly sure of what they had just advanced. As a satisfactory answer to the question, one of them took a strainer, poured the liquor through it, and drank it without hesitation. All the others followed his example. "What!" said ROBESPIERRE to him, "do you dare to drink these "poisoned brandies?"—"I durst do much more," answered he, "when I put my name to the Report."

This service, though in itself of little importance, impressed the public mind with a conception of the utility of the *savans*, a greater number of whom were called into the Committee of Public Welfare. There they were secure from subaltern informers, with which France abounded. Having concerns only with the members charged with the military department, who were endeavouring to save them, they might, by keeping silence, escape the suspicious looks of the tyrants of the day. There was then but one resource for men of merit and virtue, namely, to conceal their existence, and cause themselves to be forgotten.

In the midst of this sanguinary persecution, all the means of defence employed by France, issued from the obscure retreat where the genius of the Sciences had taken refuge.

Powder was the article for which there was

the most urgent occasion. The soldiers were on the point of wanting it. The magazines were empty. The administrators of the powder-mills were assembled to know what they could do. They declared that the annual produce amounted to three millions of pounds only, that the basis of it was saltpetre drawn from India, that extraordinary encouragements might raise them to five millions; but that no hopes ought to be entertained of exceeding that quantity. When the members of the Committee of Public Welfare announced to the administrators that they must manufacture seventeen millions of pounds of powder in the space of a few months, the latter remained stupified. "If you succeed in "doing this," said they, "you must have a "method of making powder of which we are "ignorant."

This, however, was the only mean of saving the country. As the French were almost excluded from the sea, it was impossible to think of procuring saltpetre from India. The *savans* offered to extract all from the soil of the Republic. A general requisition called to this labour the whole mass of the people. Short and simple directions, spread with inconceivable activity, made, of a difficult art, a common process. All the abodes of men and animals were explored. Saltpetre was sought for even in the

ruins of Lyons; and soda, collected from among the ashes of the forests of La Vendée.

The results of this grand movement would have been useless, had not the Sciences been seconded by new efforts. Native saltpetre is not fit for making powder; it is mixed with salts and earths which render it moist, and diminish its activity. The process employed for purifying it demanded considerable time. The construction of powder-mills alone would have required several months, and before that period, France might have been subjugated. Chymistry invented new methods for refining and drying saltpetre in a few days. As a substitute for mills, pulverized charcoal, sulphur, and saltpetre were mixed, with copper balls, in casks which were turned round by hand. By these means, powder was made in twelve hours; and thus was verified that bold assertion of a member of the Committee of Public Welfare: "Earth im-"pregnated with saltpetre shall be produced," said he, "and, in five days after, your cannon "shall be loaded."

Circumstances were favourable for fixing, in all their perfection, the only arts which occupied France. Persons from all the departments were sent to Paris, in order to be instructed in the manufacture of arms and saltpetre. Rapid courses of lectures were given on this subject.

They contributed little to the general movement, which had saved the Republic, but they had an effect no less important, that of bringing to light the astonishing facility of the French for acquiring the arts and sciences; a happy gift which forms one of the finest features in the character of the nation.

Notwithstanding so many services rendered by the Sciences, the learned were not less persecuted: the most celebrated among them were the most exposed. The venerable DAUBENTON, the co-operator in the labours of BUFFON, escaped persecution only because he had written a work on the improvement of sheep, and was taken for a simple shepherd. COUSIN was not so fortunate; yet, in his confinement, he had the stoicism to compose works of geometry, and give lessons of physics to his companions of misfortune.

LAVOISIER, that immortal character, whose generosity in promoting the progress of science could be equalled only by his own enlightened example in cultivating it, was also apprehended. As one of the Commissioners for fixing the standard of weights and measures, great hopes were entertained that he might be restored to liberty. Measures were taken with that intention; but these were not suited to the spirit of the moment. The commission was

dissolved, and LAVOISIER left in prison. Shortly after, this ever to be lamented *savant* was taken to the scaffold. He would still be living, had his friends acted in the cupidity of the tyrants who then governed, instead of appealing to their justice.

About this period, some members of the Convention having introduced a discussion in favour of public instruction, it was strongly opposed by the revolutionary party, who saw in the Sciences nothing but a poison which enervated republics. According to them, the finest schools were the popular societies. To do good was then impossible, and to shew an inclination to do it, exposed to the greatest danger the small number of enlightened men France still possessed.

In this point of view, every thing was done that circumstances permitted. A military school was created, where young men from all the departments were habituated to the exercise of arms and the life of a camp. It was called *L'École de Mars.* Its object was not to form officers, but intelligent soldiers, who, spread in the French armies, should soon render them the most enlightened of Europe, as they were already the most inured to the hardships of war.

Thus, a small number of men, whose conduct has been too ill appreciated, alone retarded, by constant efforts, the progress of barbarism,

and struggled in a thousand ways against the oppression which others contented themselves with supporting.

At length, the bloody throne, raised by ROBESPIERRE, was overthrown: hope succeeded to terror; and victory, to defeat. Then, the Sciences, issuing from the focus in which they had been concentered and concealed, reappeared in all their lustre. The services they had rendered, the dangers which had threatened them, were felt and acknowledged. The plan of campaign, formed by the scientific men, called to the Committee of Public Welfare, had completely succeeded. The French armies had advanced on the rear of those of the allies, and, threatening to cut off their retreat, not only forced them to abandon the places they had taken, but also marched from conquest to conquest on their territory.

The means of having iron, steel, saltpetre, powder, and arms, had been created during the reign of terror. The following were the results of this grand movement at the beginning of the third year of the Republic.

Twelve millions of pounds of saltpetre extracted from the soil of France in the space of nine months. Formerly, scarcely one million was drawn from it.

Fifteen founderies at work for the casting of brass cannon. Their annual produce increased to 7000 pieces. There existed in France but two establishments of this description before the revolution.

Thirty founderies for iron ordnance, yielding 13,000 pieces per year. At the breaking out of the war, there were but four, which yielded annually 900 pieces of cannon.

The buildings for the manufacture of shells, shot, and all the implements of artillery, multiplied in the same proportion.

Twenty new manufactories for side-arms, directed by a new process. Before the war, there existed but one.

An immense manufactory of fire-arms established all at once in Paris, and yielding 140,000 muskets per year, that is, more than all the old manufactories together. Several establishments of this nature formed on the same plan in the different departments of the Republic.

One hundred and eighty-eight workshops for repairing arms of every description. Before the war, there existed but six.

The establishment of a manufactory of carbines, the making of which was till then unknown in France.

The art of renewing the touch-hole of cannon discovered, and carried immediately to a perfection which admits of its being exercised in the midst of camps.

A description of the means by which tar, necessary for the navy, may be speedily extracted from the pine-tree.

Balloons and telegraphs converted into machines of war.

All the process of the arts relative to war simplified and improved by the application of the most learned theories.

A secret establishment formed at Meudon for that purpose. Experiments there made on the oxy-muriate of potash, on fire-balls, on hollow-balls, on ring-balls, &c.

Great works begun for extracting from the soil of France every thing that serves for the construction, equipment, and supplies of ships of war.

Several researches for replacing or reproducing the principal materials which the exigencies of the war had consumed, and for increasing impure potash, which the making of powder had snatched from the other manufactories.

Simple and luminous directions for fixing the art of making soap, and bringing it within reach of the meanest capacity.

The invention of the composition of which pencils are now made in France, the black lead for which was previously drawn from England; and what was inappreciable in those critical circumstances, the discovery of a method for tanning, in a few days, leather which generally required several years' preparation.

In a word, if we speak of the territorial acquisitions, which were the result of the victories obtained by means of the extraordinary resources created by the men of science, France has acquired an extent of 1,498 square leagues, and a population of 4,381,266 individuals; namely, Savoy, containing 411,700 inhabitants; the County of Nice, 93,166; Avignon, the *Comtat Venaissin*, and Dutch Flanders, 200,500; Maëstricht and Venloo, 90,000; Belgium, 1,880,000; the left bank of the Rhine, 1,658,500; Geneva and its territory, 40,000; and Mulhausen, 7,200.

P. S. Paris is now all mirth and gaiety, in consequence of the revived pleasures of the Carnival. I shall not give you my opinion of it till its conclusion.

LETTER LXXIII.

Paris, February 28, 1802.

In all great cities, one may naturally expect to find great vices; but in regard to gaming, this capital presents a scene which, I will venture to affirm, is not to be matched in any part of the world. No where is the passion, the rage for play so prevalent, so universal: no where does it cause so much havock and ruin. In every class of society here, gamesters abound. From men revelling in wealth to those scarcely above beggary, every one flies to the gaming-table; so that it follows, as a matter of course, that Paris must contain a great number of *Maisons de jeu,* or

PUBLIC GAMING-HOUSES.

They are to be met with in all parts of the town, though the head-quarters are in the *Palais du Tribunat,* or, as it is most commonly called, the *Palais Royal.* Whenever you come to Paris, and see, on the first story, a suite of rooms ostentatiously illuminated, and a blazing reverberator at the door, you may be certain that it is a house of this description.

Before the revolution, gaming was not only

tolerated in Paris, but public gaming-houses were then licensed by the government, under the agreeable name of *Académies de jeu.* There, any one might ruin himself under the immediate superintendance of the police, an officer belonging to which was always present. Besides these academies, women of fashion and impures of the first class were allowed to keep a gaming-table or *tripot de jeu,* as it was termed, in their own house. This was a privilege granted to them in order that they might thereby recover their shattered fortune. When all the necessary expenses were paid, these ladies commonly shared the profits with their protectors, that is, with their friends in power, through whose protection the *tripot* was sanctioned. Every one has heard of the fatal propensity to gaming indulged in by the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. The French women of quality followed her pernicious example, as the young male nobility did that of the Count d'Artois and the Duke of Orleans; so that, however decided might be the personal aversion of Lewis XVI to gaming, it never was more in fashion at the court of France than during his reign. This is a fact, which can be confirmed by General S—th and other Englishmen who have played deep at the queen's parties.

At the present day, play is, as I have before

stated, much recurred to as a financial resource, by many of the *ci-devant* female *noblesse* in Paris. In their parties, *bouillotte* is the prevailing game; and the speculation is productive, if the company will sit and play. Consequently, the longer the sitting, the greater the profits. The same lady who moralizes in the morning, and will read you a lecture on the mischievous consequences of gaming, makes not the smallest hesitation to press you to sit down at her *bouillotte* in the evening, where she knows you will almost infallibly be a loser. No protection, I believe, is now necessary for a lady who chooses to have a little private gaming at her residence, under the specious names of *société*, *bal*, *thé*, or *concert*. But this is not the case with the *Maisons de jeu*, where the gaming-tables are public; or even with private houses, where the object of the speculation is publicly known. These purchase a license in the following manner. A person, who is said to have several *sleeping* partners, engages to pay to the government the sum of 3,600,000 francs (*circa* £150,000 sterling) a year for the power of licensing all gaming-houses in this capital, and also to account for a tenth part of the profits, which enter the coffer of the minister at the head of the department of the police. This contribution serves to defray part of the expense

of greasing the wheels of that intricate machine. Without such a license, no gaming-house can be opened in Paris. Sometimes it is paid for by a share in the profits, sometimes by a certain sum per sitting.

These *Maisons de jeu*, where dupes are pitted against cheats, are filled from morning to night with those restless beings, who, in their eager pursuit after fortune, almost all meet with disappointment, wretchedness, ruin, and every mischief produced by gaming. This vice, however, carries with it its own punishment; but it is unconquerable in the heart which it ravages. It lays a man prostrate before those fantastic idols, distinguished by the synonymous names of fate, chance, and destiny. It banishes from his mind the idea of enriching himself, or acquiring a competence by slow and industrious means. It feeds, it inflames his cupidity, and deceives him in order to abandon him afterwards to remorse and despair.

From the mere impulse of curiosity, I have been led to visit some of the principal *Maisons de jeu*. I shall therefore represent what I have seen.

In a spacious suite of apartments, where different games of chance are played, is a table of almost immeasurable length, covered with a green cloth, with a red piece at one end, and

a black one at the other. It is surrounded by a crowd of persons of both sexes, squeezed together, who, all suspended between fear and hope, are waiting, with eager eyes and open mouth, for the favourable or luckless chance. I will suppose that the banker or person who deals the cards, announces "*rouge perd, couleur gagne.*" The oracle has spoken. At these words of fate, on one side of the table, you see countenances smiling, but with a smile of inquietude, and on the other, long faces, on which is imprinted the palid hue of death. However, the losers recover from their stupor: they hope that the next chance will be more fortunate. If that happens, and the banker calls out "*rouge gagne, couleur perd*;" then the scene changes, and the same persons whom you have just seen so gay, make a sudden transition from joy to sadness, and *vice versa*. This contrast no language can paint, and you must see it, in order to conceive how the most headstrong gamblers can spend hour after hour in such a continual state of agitation, in which they are alternately overwhelmed by rage, anguish, and despair. Some are seen plucking out their hair by the roots, scratching their face, and tearing their clothes to pieces, when, after having lost considerable sums, frequently they have not enough left to pay for a break-

fast or dinner. What an instructive lesson for the novice! What a subject of reflection for the philosophic spectator! At these scenes of folly and rapacity it is that the demon of suicide exults in the triumphs he is on the point of gaining over the weakness, avarice, and false pride of mortals. If the wretched victim has not recourse to a pistol, he probably seeks a grave at the bottom of the river.

Among these professed gamblers, it often happens that some of them, in order to create what they term *resources*, imagine tricks and impostures scarcely credible. I shall relate an anecdote which I picked up in the course of my inquiries respecting the gaming-houses in Paris. It may be necessary to premise that the counterfeit louis, which are in circulation in this country, and have nearly the appearance of the real coin, are employed by these knaves; they commonly produce them at night, because they then run less risk of being detected in passing them; but these means are very common and almost out of date.

In the great gaming-houses in Paris, it is customary to have on the table several *rouleaux* of louis d'or. An old, experienced gambler came one day to a house of this class, with his pockets full of leaden *rouleaux* of the exact form

and size of those containing fifty louis d'or. He placed at one of the ends of the table (either black or red) one of his leaden *rouleaux:* he lost. The master of the bank took up his *rouleau,* and, without opening it, put it with the good *rouleaux* in the middle of the table, where the bank is kept. The old gambler, without being disconcerted, staked another. He won, and withdrew the good *rouleau* given him, leaving the counterfeit one on the table, at the same time calling out, " I stake " ten louis out of the *rouleau.*" The cards were drawn; he won: the banker, to pay him the ten louis, took a *rouleau* from the bank. Chance willed that he lighted on the leaden *rouleau.* He endeavoured to break it open by striking it on the table: the *rouleau* withstood his efforts. The gambler, without deranging his features, then said to the banker; " Mind you don't " break it." The banker, disconcerted, tore the paper, and, on opening it, found it to contain nothing but lead. There being no positive proof against the gambler, he was permitted to retire, and his only punishment was to be in future excluded from this gaming-house. But he had the consolation of knowing that ninety-nine others would be open to him. However, this and other impostures have led to a regu-

lation, that, in all these houses, the value of every stake should be apparent to the eye, and openly exposed on the table.

From what I have said you might infer that *trente-et-un* (or *rouge et noir*) is the most fashionable game played here; but, though this is the case, it is not the only one in high vogue. Many others, equally pernicious, are pursued at the same time, such as *la roulette*, *passe-dix*, and *biribi*, at which cheats and sharpers can, more at their ease, execute their feats of dexterity and schemes of plunder. Women frequent the gaming-tables as well as the men, and often pledge their last shift to make up a stake. It is shocking to contemplate a young female gamester, the natural beauty of whose countenance is distorted into deformity by a succession of agonizing passions. Yet so distressing an object is no uncommon thing in Paris.

You may, perhaps, be curious to know what are these games of *trente-et-un*, *biribi*, *passe-dix*, and *la roulette*. Never having played at any of them, such a description as I might pretend to give, could at best be but imperfect. For which reason I shall not engage in the attempt.

It is confidently affirmed that in the principal towns of France, namely, Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Rouen, &c. the rage for play

is no less prevalent than in the capital, where gaming-houses daily increase in number.* They are now established in every quarter in Paris, even the poorest, and there are some where the lowest of the populace can indulge in a *penchant* for gaming, as the stake is proportioned to their means. This is the ruin of every class of inhabitants and of foreigners; so much so, that suicides here increase in exact proportion to the increase of gaming-houses.

Is it not astonishing that the government should suffer, still more promote the existence of an evil so pernicious in every point of view? From the present state of the French finances, it would, notwithstanding, appear that every consideration,

* During the Carnival of the present year (1803) the masked balls at the grand French Opera were quite deserted, in consequence of a new gaming-house, established solely for foreigners, having, by the payment of considerable sums to the government, obtained permission to give masked balls. These balls were all the rage. There was one every Tuesday, and the employment of the whole week was to procure cards of invitation; for persons were admitted by *invitation* only, no money being taken. The rooms, though spacious, were warm and comfortable; the company, tolerably good, and extremely numerous, but chiefly composed of foreigners. *Trente-et-un*, *biribi*, *pharaon*, *creps*, and other fashionable games were played, so that the *speculators* could very well afford to give all sorts of refreshments, and an elegant supper *gratis*.

however powerful, must yield to the want of money required for defraying the expenses of the department of the Police.

Minima de malis was the excuse of the old government of France for promoting gaming. "From the crowd of dissipated characters of every description, accumulated in great cities," said its partisans, "governments find themselves compelled to tolerate certain abuses, in order to avoid evils of greater magnitude. They are forced to compound with the passions which they are unable to destroy; and it is better that men should be professed gamblers than usurers, swindlers, and thieves." Such was the reasoning employed in behalf of the establishment of the *Académies de jeu*, which existed prior to the revolution. Such is the reasoning reproduced, at the present day, in favour of the *Maisons de jeu*; but, when I reflect on all the horrors occasioned by gaming, I most ardently wish that every argument in favour of so destructive a vice, may be combated by a pen like that of Rousseau, which, Sir William Jones says, "had the property of spreading light "before it on the darkest objects, as if he had "written with phosphorus on the walls of a "cavern."

LETTER LXXIV.

Paris, March 1, 1802.

Of all the institutions subsisting here before the revolution, that which has experienced the greatest enlargement, is the

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

This establishment, formerly called *Le Jardin du Roi*, and now more commonly known by the name of *Le Jardin des Plantes*, received its present denomination by a decree of the National Convention, dated the 10th of June 1793. It is situated on the south bank of the Seine, nearly facing the Arsenal, and consists of a botanical garden, a collection of natural history, a library of works relating to that science, an amphitheatre for the lectures, and a *ménagerie* of living animals.

Originally, it was nothing more than a garden for medicinal plants, formed under that title, in 1626, by Guy de la Brosse, principal physician to Lewis XIII, who sanctioned the establishment by letters patent. The king's physicians were almost always intendants of this garden till the year 1739, when it was placed under the direction of Buffon. Before his time, the cabinet was trifling. It consisted only of

some curiosities collected by GEOFFROY, and a few shells which had belonged to TOURNEFORT; but, through the zeal of BUFFON, and the care of his co-operator DAUBENTON, it became a general *dépôt* of natural history, and its riches had increased still more than its utility. On the breaking out of the revolution, it had been protected through that sort of respect which the rudest men have for the productions of nature, whence they either receive or expect relief for their sufferings. It had even been constantly defended by the revolutionary administration, under whose control and dependence it was placed. Regarding it, in some measure, as their private property, their pride was interested in its preservation; and had any attempt been made to injure it, they would infallibly have caused an insurrection among the inhabitants of the surrounding *faubourg*. These singular circumstances, joined to the good understanding prevailing among the professors, had maintained this fine establishment in a state, if not increasing, at least stationary. On the revival of order, ideas were entertained of giving to it an extension which had already been projected and decreed, even during the reign of terror.

The botanical garden was enlarged; the extent of the ground intended for the establishment was doubled; a *ménagerie* was formed;

new hot-houses and new galleries were constructed; the addition of new professors was confirmed, and all the necessary disbursements were made with magnificence. Thus, in the same place where every production of nature was assembled, natural history was for the first time taught in its aggregate; and these courses of lectures, become celebrated by the brilliancy of the facts illustrated in them, the number of pupils who frequent them, and the great works of which they have been the cause or the motive, have rendered the MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY one of the first establishments of instruction existing in Europe.

Formerly, there were but three professors attached to this establishment. At present, there are no less than thirteen, who each give a course of forty lectures. The courses of zoology and mineralogy take place in the halls of the cabinet containing the collections corresponding to each of those sciences. The courses of botany, anatomy, and chemistry are delivered in the great amphitheatre, and that of natural iconography in the library. The days and hours of the lectures are announced every year by particular advertisements.

The establishment is administered, under the authority of the Minister of the Interior, by the professors, who choose annually, from among

themselves, a director. At present, that situation is held by Fourcroy. Although this celebrated professor, in his lectures on chemistry, must principally attach himself to minerals, the particular object of chemical inquiry, he is far from neglecting vegetable and animal substances, the analysis of which will, in time, spread great light on organic bodies. The most recent discoveries on the exact constitution of bodies are made known in the course of these lectures, and a series of experiments, calculated for elucidating the demonstrations, takes place under the eyes of the auditors.

No one possesses more than Fourcroy the rare talent of classing well his subjects, of presenting facts in a striking point of view, and of connecting them by a succession of ideas extremely rapid, and expressed in a voice whose melody gives an additional charm to eloquence. The pleasure of hearing him is peculiarly gratifying; and, indeed, when he delivers a lecture, the amphitheatre, spacious as it is, is much too small to contain the crowd of auditors. Then, the young pupils are seen with their eyes stedfastly fixed on their master, catching his words with avidity, and fearing to lose one of them; thus paying by their attention the most flattering tribute to the astonishing facility of this orator of science, from whose lips naturally

flow, as from a spring, the most just and most select expressions. Frequently too, carried away by the torrent of his eloquence, they forget what they have just heard, to think only of what he is saying. Fourcroy speaks in this manner for upwards of two hours, without any interruption, and, what is more, without tiring either his auditors or himself. He writes with no less facility than he speaks. This is proved by the great number of works which he has published. But in his writings, his style is more calm, more smooth than that of his lectures.

Each professor superintends and arranges the part of the collections corresponding to the science which he is charged to teach. For this purpose, there are also assistant naturalists, whose employment is to prepare the various articles of natural history. The keeper of the cabinet, under the authority of the director, takes all the measures necessary for the preservation of the collections. The principal ones are:

1. The cabinet of natural history, containing the animal kingdom, divided into its classes; the mineral kingdom; the fossils, woods, fruits, and other vegetable productions, together with the herbals. This cabinet, which occupies the buildings on the right, on entering from the street, is open to students on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, from eleven o'clock

till two, and to the public in general every Tuesday and Friday in the afternoon.

2. The library, chiefly composed of works relating to natural history, contains, among other valuable articles, an immense collection of animals and plants, painted on vellum. Three painters are charged to continue this collection under the superintendance of the professors. The library is open to the public every day from eleven o'clock to two.

3. The cabinet of anatomy, containing the preparations relative to the human race and to animals. It is situated in a separate building, and for the present open to students only.

4. The botanical school, containing the plants growing in the open ground, and the numerous hot-houses in which are cultivated those peculiar to warm countries.

5. The *ménagerie* of foreign animals. At the present moment, they are dispersed in various parts of the garden; but they are shortly to be assembled in a spacious and agreeable place.

6. The chemical laboratory and the collection of chemical productions.

To these may be added a laboratory for the preparation of objects of natural history, and another for that of objects of anatomy.

Notwithstanding the improved state to which BUFFON had brought this establishment, yet,

through the united care of the several scientific men who have since had the direction of it, the constant attention bestowed on it by the government, and even by the conquests of the French armies, its riches have been so much increased, that its collection of natural history may at this day be considered as the finest in being. The department of the minerals and that of the quadrupeds are nearly complete; that of the birds is one of the most considerable and the handsomest known; and the other classes, without answering yet the idea which a naturalist might conceive of them, are, nevertheless, superior to what other countries have to offer.

Among the curious or scarce articles in this Museum, the following claim particular notice:

In the class of quadrupeds, adult individuals, stuffed, such as the camelopard, the hippopotamus, the single-horned rhinoceros, the Madagascar squirrel, the Senegal lemur, two varieties of the oran-outang, the proboscis-monkey, different specimens of the indri, some new species of bats and opossums, the Batavian kangaroo, and several antelopes, ant-eaters, &c.

In the class of birds, a great number of new or rare species, and among those remarkable either for size or beauty, are the golden vulture, the great American eagle, the Impey peacock, the Juno pheasant or argus, the plantain-eater, &c.

Among the reptiles, the crocodile of the Ganges, the fimbriated tortoise of Cayenne, &c.

Among the shells, the glass patella, and a number of valuable, scarce, or new species.

The collection of insects has just been completed through the assiduity of the estimable LAMARCK, the professor who has charge of that department.

In the mineral kingdom, independently of the numerous and select choice of all the specimens, are to be remarked as objects of particular curiosity, the petrifactions of crocodiles' bones found in the mountain of St. Pierre at Maëstricht, and the collection of impressions of fishes from Mount Bolca, near Verona.

At the present moment, the *ménagerie* contains a female elephant only, the male having died since my arrival in Paris, three dromedaries, two camels, five lions, male and female, a white bear, a brown bear, a mangousta, a civet, an alligator, an ostrich, and several other scarce and curious animals, the number and variety of which receive frequent additions. In other parts of the garden are inclosures for land and sea fowls, as well as ponds for fishes.

The denomination of *Jardin des Plantes* is very appropriate to this garden, as it furnishes to all the botanical establishments throughout France seeds of trees and plants useful to the progress

of agriculture and of the arts; and hence the indigent poor are supplied with such medicinal plants as are proper for the cure or relief of their complaints.

LETTER LXXV.

Paris, March 3, 1802.

It has been repeatedly observed that civilized nations adhere to their ancient customs for no other reason than because they are ancient. The French have, above all, a most decided partiality for those which afford them opportunities of amusement. It must therefore have been a subject of no small regret to them, on the annual return of those periods, to find the government taking every measure for the suppression of old habits. For some years since the revolution, all disguises and masquerades were strictly prohibited; but, though the executive power forbade pasteboard masks, its authority could not extend to those mental disguises which have been occasionally worn by many leading political characters in this country No sooner was the prohibition against masquerading removed, than the Parisians gave fu

scope to the indulgence of their inclination; and this year was revived, in all its glory, the celebration of

THE CARNIVAL.

Yesterday was the conclusion of that mirthful period, during which Folly seemed to have taken possession of all the inhabitants of this populous city. Every thing that gaiety, whim, humour, and eccentricity could invent, was put in practice to render it a sort of continued jubilee. From morn to night, the concourse of masks of every description was great beyond any former example; but still greater was the concourse of spectators. All the principal streets and public gardens were thronged by singular characters, in appropriate dresses, moving about in small detached parties or in numerous close bodies, on foot, on horseback, or in carriages. The *Boulevards*, the *Rue de la Loi*, and the *Rue St. Honoré*, exhibited long processions of masks and grotesque figures, crowded both in the inside and on the outside of vehicles of all sorts, from a *fiacre* to a German waggon, drawn by two, four, six, and eight horses; while the *Palais Royal*, the *Tuileries*, the *Place de la Concorde*, and the *Champs Elysées* were filled with pedestrian wits, amusing the surrounding multitude by the liveliness of their sallies and the

smartness of their repartee. Here, Scapins, Scaramouches, Punchinellos, Pierrots, Harlequins, and Columbines, together with nuns, friars, abbés, bishops, and *marquis* in caricature, enlivened the scene: there, sultans, sultanas, janissaries, mamlûks, Turks, Spaniards, and Indians, in stately pride, attracted attention. On one side, a Mars and Venus, an Apollo and Daphne, figured under the attributes of heathen mythology: on another, more than one Adam and Eve recalled to mind the origin of the creation.

To the eye of an untravelled Englishman, the novelty of this sight must have been a source of no small entertainment. If he was of a reflecting mind, however, it must have given rise to a variety of observations, and some of them of a rather serious nature. In admiring the order and decency which reigned amidst so much mirth and humour, he must have been desirous to appreciate the influence of political events on the character of this people. In a word, he must have been anxious to ascertain how far the return of our Gallic neighbours to their ancient habits, announces a return to their ancient institutions.

It is well known that the Carnival of modern times is an imitation of the Saturnalia of the ancients, and that the celebration of those festivals was remarkable for the liberty which uni-

versally prevailed; slaves being, at that period, permitted to ridicule their masters, and speak with freedom on every subject. During the last years of the French. monarchy, the Parisians neglected not to avail themselves of this privilege. When all classes were confounded, at the time of the Carnival, the most elevated became exposed to the lash of the lowest; and, under the mask of satire, the abuses which had crept into religious societies, and the corruption which prevailed in every department of the State, escaped not their bold censure. From a consciousness, no doubt, of their own weakness, the different governments that have ruled over France since the revolution, dreaded the renewal of scenes in which their tottering authority might be overthrown; but such an apprehension cannot have been entertained by the present government, as manifetsly appears from the almost unlimited license which has reigned during the late Carnival. Notwithstanding which, it is worthy of remark that no satirical disguises were met with, no shafts of ridicule were aimed at the constituted authorities, no invective was uttered against such and such an opinion, no abuse was levelled against this or that party. Censure and malice either slept or durst not shew themselves, though freedom of expression seemed to be under no restraint.

Formerly, when the people appeared indifferent to the motley amusements of the Carnival, and little disposed to mix in them, either as actors or spectators, it was not uncommon for the government to pay for some masquerading. The *mouchards* and underlings of the police were habited as grotesque characters, calculated to excite curiosity, and promote mirth. They then spread themselves, to the number of two or three thousand, over different parts of the town, and gave to the streets of Paris a false colouring of joy and gladness; for the greater the misery of the people, the more was it thought necessary to exhibit an outward representation of public felicity. But these political impostures, having been seen through, at length failed in their effect, and were nearly relinquished before the revolution. At that time, nothing diverted the populace so much as *attrapes* or bites; and every thing that engendered gross and filthy ideas was sure to please. Pieces of money, heated purposely, were scattered on the pavement, in order that persons, who attempted to pick them up, might burn their fingers. Every sort of bite was practised; but the greatest attraction and acme of delight consisted of *chianlits*, that is, persons masked, walking about, apparently, in their shirt, the tail of which was besmeared with mustard.

At the present day, these coarse and disgusting

jokes are evidently laid aside, as some of a more rational kind are exhibited; such as the nun, partly concealed in a truss of straw, and strapped on the catering friar's back; the effect of the galvanic fluid; and many others too numerous to mention. No factitious mirth was this year displayed; it was all natural; and if it did not add to the small sum of happiness of the distressed part of the Parisian community, it must, for a while at least, have made them forget their wretchedness. With few exceptions, every one seemed employed in laughing or in exciting laughter. Many of the characters assumed were such as afforded an opportunity of displaying a particular species of wit or humour; but some of the masquerading parties, being an excellent imitation of the rich costumes of Asia, must have been extremely expensive.

To conclude, the masked balls at the Opera, on the last days of the Carnival, were numerously attended. Very few characters were here attempted, and those were but faintly supported. Adventures are the principal object of the frequenters of these balls, and I have reason to think that the persons who went in quest of them were not disappointed. In short, though I have often passed the Carnival in Paris, I never witnessed one that went off with greater *éclat*. As the Turkish Spy observes, a small

quantity of ashes, dropped, the day after its conclusion, on the head of these people in disguise, cools their frenzy. From being mad and foolish, they become calm and rational.

LETTER LXXVI.

Paris, March 5, 1802.

As I foresee that my private affairs will, probably, require my presence in England sooner than I expected, I hasten to give you an idea of the principal public edifices which I have not yet noticed. One of these is the *Luxembourg* Palace, now called the

PALAIS DU SÉNAT CONSERVATEUR.

Mary of Medicis, relict of Henry IV, having purchased of the Duke of Luxembourg his hotel and its dependencies, erected on their site this palace. It was built in 1616, under the direction of JACQUES DE BROSSE, on the plan of the *Pitti* palace at Florence.

Next to the *Louvre*, the *Luxembourg* is the most spacious palace in Paris. It is particularly distinguished for its bold character, its regularity, and the beauty of its proportions. The whole façade is ornamented with coupled pilas-

ters: on the ground-floor, the Tuscan order is employed, and above, the Doric, with alternate rustics. In the four pavilions, placed at the angles of the principal pile, the Ionic has been added to the other two orders, because they are more elevated than the rest of the buildings. Towards the *Rue de Tournon*, the two pavilions communicate by a handsome terrace, in the middle of which is a circular saloon, surmounted by a dome of the most elegant proportion. Beneath this dome is the principal entrance. The court is spacious, and on each side of it are covered arches which form galleries on the ground-floor and in front of the upper story.

The twenty-four pictures which Mary of Medicis had caused to be painted by the celebrated RUBENS, for the gallery of the *Luxembourg*, had been removed from it some years before the revolution. At that time even, they were intended for enriching the Museum of the *Louvre*. Four of them are now exhibited there in the Great Gallery. They are allegorical; with the other twenty, they represent the prosperous part of the history of that queen, and form a striking contrast to the adversity she afterwards experienced through the persecution of Cardinal Richelieu.

To gratify his revenge, he ordered all the

furniture, &c. belonging to Mary of Medicis to be sold, together with the statues which then decorated the courts and garden of the *Luxembourg*, and pursued with inveteracy the unfortunate queen who had erected this magnificent edifice. Being exiled from France in 1631, she wandered for a long time in Flanders, and also in England, till the implacable cardinal prevailed on Charles I, to command her to quit the kingdom. In 1642, she took refuge at Cologne, and, at the age of 68, there died in a garret, almost through hunger and distress.

Before the revolution, this palace belonged to Monsieur, next brother to Lewis XVI. It has since been occupied by the Directory, each of whose members here had apartments. No material change has yet been made in it; nor does any thing announce that the partial alterations intended, either in its exterior or interior, will speedily be completed.

"———*Pendent opera interrupta minæque*, &c."

At the present day, the *Luxembourg* is appropriated to the Conservative Senate, whose name it has taken, and who here hold their sittings in a hall, fitted up in a style of magnificence still superior to that of the Legislative Body. But the sittings of the former are not public like those of the latter; and as I had

no more than a peep at their fine hall, I cannot enter into a description of its beauties.

However, I took a view of their garden, in which I had formerly passed many a pleasant hour. Here, workmen are employed in making considerable improvements. It was before very irregular, particularly towards the south, where the view from the palace was partly concealed by the buildings of the monastery of the Carthusians. By degrees, these irregularities are made to disappear, and this garden will shortly be laid out in such a manner as to correspond better with the majesty of the palace, and display its architecture to greater advantage. Alleys of trees, which were decayed from age, have been cut down, and replaced by young plants of thriving growth. In front of the south façade is to be a tasteful parterre, with an oblong piece of water in its centre. Beyond the garden is a large piece of ground formerly belonging to the Carthusian monastery, which is now nearly demolished; this ground is to be converted into a national nursery for all sorts of valuable fruit-trees. Being contiguous to the garden of the Senate, with which it communicates, it will furnish a very extensive promenade, and consequently add to the agreeableness of the place.

The present Minister of the Interior, CHAPTAL, who cultivates the arts and sciences with

no less zeal than success, purposes to make here essays on the culture of vine-plants of every species, in order to obtain comparative results, which will throw a new light on that branch of rural economy.

A great number of vases and statues are placed in the garden of the Senate. Many of these works are indifferently executed, though a few of them are in a good style. Certainly, a more judicious and more decorous choice ought to have been made. It was not necessary to excite regret in the mind of the moralist, by placing under the eyes of the public figures of both sexes which are repugnant to modesty. If it be really meant to attempt to mend the loose morals of the nation, why are nudities, which may be considered as the leaven of corruption, exposed thus in this and other national gardens in Paris?

March 5, in continuation.

St. Foix, in his "*Essais historiques sur Paris*," speaking of the Bastille, says, "it is a castle, "which, without being strong, is one of the "most formidable in Europe." In their arduous struggle for liberty, the French have scarcely left a vestige of this dread abode, in

which have been immured so many victims of political vengeance. I will not pretend to affirm that such is the description of prisoners now confined in

LE TEMPLE.

But when the liberty of individuals lies at the mercy of arbitrary power, every one has a right to draw his own inference.

This edifice takes its name from the Templars, whose chief residence it was till they were annihilated in 1313. Philip the Fair and Clement V contrived, under various absurd pretences, to massacre and burn the greater part of the knights of this order. The knights of St. John of Jerusalem were put in possession of all the property of the Templars, except such part as the king of France and the Pope thought fit to share between them. The *Temple* then became the provincial house of the Grand Priory of France.

The Grand Priory consisted of the inclosure within the walls of the *Temple*, where stood a palace for the Grand Prior, a church, and several houses inhabited by shopkeepers and mechanics; but, with the considerable domains annexed to it, this post, before the revolution, yielded to the eldest son of the Count d'Artois, as Grand Prior, an annual revenue of

200,000 livres. The inclosure was at that time a place of refuge for debtors, where they enjoyed the privilege of freedom from arrest.

The palace was erected by JACQUES SOUVRÉ, Grand Prior of France. Near it, is a large Gothic tower of a square form, flanked by four round turrets of great elevation, built by HUBERT, treasurer to the Templars, who died in 1222.

It was in this building, which was considered as one of the most solid in France, that Lewis XVI was confined from the middle of September 1792 to the day of his execution. From the 13th of August till that period, the royal family had occupied the part of the palace which has been preserved. This tower, when it had been entirely insulated and surrounded by a ditch, was inclosed by a high wall, which also included part of the garden. The casements were provided with strong iron bars, and masked by those shutters, called, I believe, *trunk-lights*. As for the life which the unhappy monarch led in this prison, a detailed narrative of it has been published in England, by Cléry, his faithful *valet-de-chambre*.

I have not been very anxious to approach the *Temple*, because I concluded that, if fame was not a liar, there was no probability of my having an opportunity of seeing any part of it,

except the outer wall. The result was a confirmation of my opinion. Who are its occupiers? What is their number? What are their crimes? These are questions which naturally intrude themselves on the mind, when one surveys the turrets of this new Bastille—for, whether a place of confinement for state-prisoners be called *La Bastille* or *Le Temple*, nevertheless it is a state-prison, and reminds one of slavery, which, as Sterne says, is, in any disguise, a bitter draught; and though thousands, in all ages, have been made to drink of it, still it is not, on that account, less bitter.

LETTER LXXVII.

Paris, March 8, 1802.

Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be always able to answer your inquiries without hesitation. Considering the round of amusements in which I live, I flatter myself you will readily admit that it requires no small share of good-will and perseverance to devote so much time to scribbling for your entertainment. As for information, you will, on your arrival in Paris, know how much or how little you have derived from the perusal of my letters. You

will then have it in your power to compare and judge. With the originals before you, you cannot be at a loss to determine how far the sketches resemble them.

Some of your inquiries have been already answered in my former letters. Among the number, however, you will find no reply on the subject of the

PRESENT STATE OF THE FRENCH PRESS.

This question being of a nature no less delicate than that concerning the police, you cannot but commend my discretion in adopting a similar method to gratify your curiosity; that is, to refer you to the intelligent author whom I quoted on the former occasion. If common report speaks the truth—*Sit mihi fas audita loqui?*—the press here is now in much the same state in which it was before the revolution. I shall therefore borrow again the language of MERCIER, who is a famous dreamer, inasmuch as many of his dreams have been realized: yet, with all his foresight and penetration, I question whether he ever dreamt that his picture of the French press, drawn in the interval between the years 1781 and 1788, would still be, in some respects, a true one at the beginning of the year 1802. But, as Boileau shrewdly remarks,

"*Le vrai peut quelquefois n'être pas vraisemblable.*"

"The enemies of books," says our author, "are the enemies of knowledge, and consequently of mankind. The shackles with which the press is loaded, are an incitement for setting them at defiance. If we were to enjoy a decent liberty, we should no longer have recourse to licentiousness. There are political evils which the liberty of the press prevents, and this is already a great benefit. The interior police of States requires to be enlightened by disinterested writings. There is no one but the philosopher, satisfied with the esteem alone of his fellow-citizens, that can raise himself above the clouds formed by personal interest, and set forth the abuses of insidious custom. In short, the liberty of the press will always be the measure of civil liberty; and it is a species of thermometer, which shews, at one glance, what a people have lost or gained.

"If we adopt this maxim, we are every day losing; for every day the press is more restricted.

"Suffer people to think and speak; the public will judge: they will even find means to correct authors. The surest method to purify the press, is to render it free: obstacles irritate it: prohibitions and difficulties engender the pamphlets complained of.

"Could despotism kill thought in its sanctuary, and prevent us from communicating the

essence of our ideas to the mind of our fellow-creatures, it would do so. But not being able quite to pluck out the philosopher's tongue, and cut off his hands, it establishes an inquisition, peoples the frontiers with searchers, spreads satellites, and opens every package, in order to interrupt the infallible progress of morality and truth. Useless and puerile effort! Vain attack on the natural right of general society, and on the patriotic rights of a particular one! Reason, from day to day, strikes nations with a greater lustre, and will at last shine unclouded. It answers no purpose to fear or persecute genius: nothing will extinguish in its hands the torch of truth: the decree which its mouth pronounces, will be repeated by all posterity against the unjust man. He wished to snatch from his fellow-creatures the most noble of all privileges, that of thinking, which is inseparable from that of existing: he will have manifested his weakness and folly; and he will merit the twofold reproach of tyranny and impotence.

" When a very flat, very atrocious, and very calumniating libel appears under a fellow's coat, 'tis a contest who shall have it first. People pay an exorbitant price for it; the hawker who cannot read, and who wishes only to get bread for his poor family, is apprehended, and sent

to prison, where he shifts for himself as well as he can.

" The more the libel is prohibited, the more eager we are for it. When we have read it, and we see that nothing compensates for its mean temerity, we are ashamed to have sought after it. We scarcely dare say, *we have read it:* 'tis the scum of low literature, and what is there without its scum?

" Contempt would be the surest weapon against those miserable productions which are equally destitute of truth and talent.

" When will men in power know how to disdain equally the interested encomiums of intriguing flatterers and the satires produced by hunger?

" Besides, those who sit in the first boxes must always expect some shafts levelled at them by those who are in the pit; this becomes almost inevitable. They must needs pay for their more commodious place: at least we attribute to those who rule over us more enjoyments: they have some which they will avow, solely with a view to raise themselves above the multitude. The human heart is naturally envious. Let men in power then forgive or dissemble seasonably: satire will fall to the ground; it is by shewing themselves impassible, that they will disarm ardent malignity.

" Nevertheless, there is a kind of odious libel, which, having every characteristic of calumny, ought to be repressed. This is commonly nothing more than the fruit of anonymous and envenomed revenge: for what are the secret intrigues of courts to any man of letters? He will know time enough that which will suit the pen of history.

" A libeller should be punished, as every thing violent ought to be. But the parties interested should abstain from pronouncing; for where then would be the proportion between the punishment and the crime?

" I apply not the name of libels to those atrocious and gratuitous accusations against the private life of persons in power or individuals unconnected with the government. Such injurious and unmeaning shafts are an attack on honour: their authors should be punished.

" The police detected and apprehended one of its inspectors, who, being charged to discover those libels, proposed the composition of similar ones to some half-starved authors. After having laid for them this infernal snare for the gain of a little money, he informed against them, and sold them to the government.

" These miscreants, blinded by the eager thirst of a little gold, divert themselves with the uneasiness of the government, and the more

they see it in the trances of apprehension, the more they delight in magnifying the danger, and doubling its alarms.

" Liberty has rendered the English government insensible to libels. Disdain is certain, before the work is commenced. If the satire is ingenious, people laugh at it, without believing it; if it is flat, they despise it.

" Why cannot the French government partly adopt this indifference? A contempt, more marked, for those vile and unknown pens that endeavour to wound the sensibility of pride, would disgust the readers of the flat and lying satires after which they are so eager, only because they imagine that the government is really offended by them.

" It is to be observed that the productions that flatter more or less public malignity, spread in fugitive sparks a central fire, which, if compressed, would, perhaps, produce an explosion.

" Magistrates have not yet been seen disdaining those obscure shafts, rendering themselves invulnerable from the openness of their proceedings, and considering that praise will be mute, as long as criticism cannot freely raise its voice.

" Let them then punish the flattery by which they are assailed, since they are so much afraid of the libel that always contains some good truths:

besides, the public are there to judge the detractor; and no unjust satire ever circulated a fortnight, without being branded with contempt.

" Ministers reciprocally deceive each other when they are attacked in this manner; the one laughs at the storm which has just burst on the other, and promotes secretly what he appears to prosecute openly and with warmth. It would be a curious thing if one could bring to light the good tricks which the votaries of ambition play each other in the road to power and fortune.

" There is nothing now printed in Paris, in the line of politics and history, but satires and falsehoods. Foreigners look down with pity on every thing that emanates from the capital on these matters. Other subjects begin to feel the consequences of this, because the restraint laid on the mind is manifested even in books of simple amusement. The presses of Paris are no longer to serve but for posting-bills, and invitations to funerals and weddings. Almanacks are already a subject too elevated, and the inquisition examines and garbles them.

" When I see a book," says MERCIER, " sanctioned by the government, I would lay a wager, without opening it, that this book contains political falsehoods. The chief magistrate may well say: " This piece of paper shall be worth a

" thousand francs;" but he cannot say: " Let this " error become truth," or, " let this truth no " longer be any thing but an error." He may say it, but he can never compel men's minds to adopt it.

" What is admirable in printing, is that these fine works, which do honour to human genius, are not to be commanded or paid for; on the contrary, it is the natural liberty of a generous mind, which unfolds itself in spite of dangers, and makes a present to human nature, in spite of tyrants. This is what renders the man of letters so commendable, and insures to him the gratitude of future ages.

" O! worthy Englishmen! generous people, strangers to our shameful servitude, carefully preserve among you the liberty of the press: it is the pledge of your freedom. At this day, you alone are the representatives of nearly all mankind; you uphold the dignity of the name of man. The thunderbolts, which strike the pride and insolence of arbitrary power, issue from your happy island. Human reason has found among you an asylum whence she may instruct the world. Your books are not subject to an inquisition; and it would require a long comment to explain to you in what manner permission is at length obtained for a flimsy pamphlet, which no one will read, to be exposed for sale, and remain unsold, on the *Quai de Gêvres*.

"We are so absurd and so little in comparison to you," adds MERCIER, "that you would be at a loss to conceive the excess of our weakness and humiliation."

LETTER LXXVIII.

Paris, March 9, 1802.

AMONG the national establishments in this metropolis, I know of none that have experienced so great an amelioration, since the revolution, as the

HOSPITALS

AND OTHER CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

The civil hospitals in Paris now form two distinct classes. The one comprehends the hospitals for the sick: the other, those for the indigent. The former are devoted to the relief of suffering human nature; the latter serve as an asylum to children, to the infirm, and to the aged indigent. All persons who are not ill enough to be admitted of necessity into the hospital the nearest to their residence, are obliged to present themselves to the *Bureau Central d'Admissions*. Here they are examined, and if there be occasion, they receive a ticket of ad-

mission for the hospital where their particular disorder is treated. At the head of the hospitals for the sick stands that so long known by the appellation of the

HÔTEL-DIEU.

Formerly, nothing more horrid could be conceived than the spectacle presented in this asylum for the afflicted. It was rather a charnel-house than an hospital; and the name of the Creator, over the gate, which recalled to mind the principle of all existence, served only to decorate the entrance of the tomb of the living.

The *Hôtel-Dieu,* which is situated in the *Parvis Notre-Dame, Ile du Palais,* was founded as far back as the year 660 by St. Landry, for the reception of the sick and maimed of both sexes, without any exception of persons. Jews, Turks, infidels, pagans, protestants, and catholics were alike admitted, without form or recommendation. Yet, though it contained but 1200 beds, and the number of patients very often exceeded 5000, and, on an average, was never less than 2500, till the year 1786, no steps were taken for enlarging the hospital, or providing elsewhere for those who could not be conveniently accommodated in it. The dead were removed from the wards only on visits made at a fixed time; so that it happened not unfrequently that

a poor helpless patient was compelled to remain for hours wedged in between two corpses. The air of the neighbourhood was contaminated by the noisome exhalations continually arising from this abode of pestilence, and that which was breathed within the walls of the hospital was so contagious, as to turn a trifling complaint into a dangerous disorder, and a simple wound into a mortification.

In 1785, the attention of the government being called to this serious evil by various memoirs, the *Academy of Sciences* was directed to investigate the truth of the bold assertions made in these publications. A commission was appointed; but as the revenues of the *Hôtel-Dieu* were immense, for a long time it was impossible to obtain from the Governors any account of their application. However, the Commissioners, directing their attention to the principal object, reported as follows: " We first compared " the *Hôtel-Dieu* and the *Hôpital de la Charité* " relative to their mortality. In 52 years, the " *Hôtel-Dieu*, out of 1,108,741 patients lost " 244,720, which is one out of four and a half. " *La Charité*, where but one dies out of seven " and a half, would have lost only 168,700, " whence results the frightful picture that the *Hô-* " *tel-Dieu*, in 52 years, has snatched from France

" 99,044 persons, whose lives would have been " saved, had the *Hôtel-Dieu* been as spacious, in " proportion, as *La Charité.* The loss in these " 52 years answers to 1906 deaths per year, " and that is nearly the tenth part of the total " and annual loss of Paris. The preservation " of this hospital in the site it now occupies, " and on its present plan, therefore produces " the same effect as a sort of plague which " constantly desolates the capital."

In consequence of this report, the hospital was enlarged so as to contain about 2000 beds. Since the revolution, the improvements introduced into the interior government of the *Hôtel-Dieu* have been great and rapid. Each patient now has a bed to himself. Those attacked by contagious disorders are transferred to the *Hospice St. Louis.* Insane persons are no longer admitted; men, thus afflicted, are sent to a special hospital established at *Charenton*; and women, to the *Salpêtrière.* Nor are any females longer received into the *Hôtel-Dieu* to lie-in; an hospital having been established for the reception of pregnant women. At the *Hôtel-Dieu,* every method has been put in practice to promote the circulation of air, and expel the insalubrious miasmata. One of these, I think, well deserves to be adopted in England.

In the French hospitals, one ward at least is now always kept empty. The moment it becomes so by the removal of the patients into another, the walls are whitewashed, and the air is purified by the fumigation with muriatic acid, according to the plan first proposed by GUYTON-MORVEAU. This operation is alternately performed in each ward in succession; that which has been the longest occupied being purified the first, and left empty till it is again wanted.

The number of hospitals in Paris has been considerably augmented. They are all supported by the government, and not, like those in England, by private benefactions. Sick children of both sexes, from the time of suckling to the age of sixteen, are no longer admitted into the different hospitals; but are received into a special hospital, extremely well arranged, and in a fine, airy situation, beyond the *Barrière de Sèvres*. Two institutions have been formed for the aged infirm and indigent, who pay, on entrance, a moderate sum. One of these charities is without the *Barrière d'Enfer*; the other, in the *Faubourg St. Martin*. In the same *faubourg*, *a Maison de Santé* is established, where the sick are treated on paying thirty *sous* a day.

An hospital for gratuitous vaccination, founded by the Prefect of the department of La Seine, is now open for the continual treatment of the

cow-pox, and the distribution of the matter to all parts of France.

In general, the charitable institutions in Paris have also undergone very considerable improvements since the revolution; for instance, the male orphans, admitted, to the number of two thousand, into the asylum formerly called *La Pitié*, in the *Faubourg St. Victor*, used to remain idle. They were employed only to follow funeral processions. At present, they are kept at work, and instructed in some useful trade.

A new institution for female orphans has been established in the *Faubourg St. Antoine*; for, here, the two sexes are not at present received into the same house, whether hospital or other charitable institution. In consequence of which, Paris now contains two receptacles for *Incurables*, in lieu of the one which formerly existed.

The place of the *Hôpital des Enfans-Trouvés* is also supplied by an establishment, on a large scale, called the

HOSPICE DE LA MATERNITÉ.

It is divided into two branches, each of which occupies a separate house. The one for foundlings, in the *Rue de la Bourbe*, is intended for the reception of children abandoned by their parents. Here they are reared, if not sent into the country to be suckled. The other, in the *Rue*

d'Enfer, which may be considered as the General Lying-in Hospital of Paris, is destined for the reception of pregnant women. Upwards of 1500 are here delivered every year.

As formerly, no formality is now required for the admission of new-born infants. In the old Foundling-Hospital, the number annually received exceeded 8000. It is not near so great at present. To those who reflect on the ravages made among the human race by war, during which disease sweeps off many more than are killed in battle, it is a most interesting sight to behold fifty or sixty little foundlings assembled in one ward, where they are carefully fed till they are provided with wet nurses.

I must here correct a mistake into which I have been betrayed, in my letter of the 26th of December, respecting the present destination of

LA SALPÊTRIÈRE.

It is no longer used as a house of correction for dissolute women. Prostitutes, taken up by the police, are now carried to St. Lazare, in the *Rue St. Denis*. Those in want of medical aid, for disorders incident to their course of life, are not sent to *Bicêtre*, but to the *ci-devant* monastery of the Capucins, in the *Rue Caumartin*.

At present, the *Salpêtrière* forms an *hospice*

for the reception of indigent or infirm old women; and young girls, brought up in the Foundling-Hospital, are placed here to be instructed in needle-work and making lace. Female idiots and mad women are also taken care of in a particular part of this very extensive building.

The *Salpêtrière* was erected by Lewis XIII, and founded as an hospital, by Lewis XIV, in 1656. The façade has a majestic appearance. Before the revolution, this edifice was said to lodge 6000 souls, and even now, it cannot contain less than 4000. By the *Plan of Paris*, you will see its situation, to the south-east of the *Jardin des Plantes*.

I shall also avail myself of the opportunity of correcting another mistake concerning

BICÊTRE.

This place has now the same destination for men that the *Salpêtrière* has for women. There is a particular hospital, lately established, for male venereal patients, in the *Rue du Faubourg St. Jacques*.

March 9, in continuation.

Previously to the decree of the 18th of August 1792, which suppressed the universities and other scientific institutions, there existed in France Faculties and Colleges of Physicians, as well as

Colleges and Commonalties of Surgeons. From one of those unaccountable contradictions of which the revolution affords so many instances, these were also suppressed at a time when they were becoming most necessary for supplying the French armies with medical men. But as soon as the fury of the revolutionary storm began to abate, the re-establishment of Schools of Medicine was one of the first objects that engaged attention.

Till these latter times, Medicine and Surgery, separated from each other, mutually contended for pre-eminence. Each had its forms and particular schools. They seemed to have divided between them suffering human nature, instead of uniting for its relief. On both sides, men of merit despised such useless distinctions; they felt that the curative art ought to comprehend all the knowledge and all the means that can conduce to its success; but these elevated ideas were combated by narrow minds, which, not being capable of embracing general considerations, always attach to details a great importance. The revolution terminated these disputes, by involving both parties in the same misfortunes.

At the time of the re-establishment of Public Instruction, the *Schools of Health*, founded at Paris, Montpelier, and Strasburg, on plans

digested by men the most enlightened, presented a complete body of instruction relative to every branch of the curative art. Physics and chemistry, which form the basis of that art, were naturally included, and nothing that could contribute to its perfection, in the present state of the sciences, was forgotten. The plan of instruction is fundamentally the same in all these schools; but is more extensive in the principal one, that is, in the

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE OF PARIS.

This very striking monument of modern architecture, situated in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, owes its erection to the partiality which Lewis XV entertained for the art of surgery. That monarch preferred it to every science; he was fond of conversing on it, and took such an interest in it, that, in order to promote its improvement, he built this handsome edifice for the *ci-devant Académie et Écoles de Chirurgie*. The architect was GONDOUIN.

The façade, extending nearly two hundred feet, presents a peristyle of the Ionic order. The interior distribution of this building corresponds with the elegance of its exterior. It contains a valuable library, a cabinet of anatomical preparations (among which is a skeleton that presents a rare instance of a general *an-*

chilosis) and imitations in wax, a chemical laboratory, a vast collection of chirurgical and philosophical instruments, and a magnificent amphitheatre, the first stone of which was laid by Lewis XVI, in December 1774. This lecture-room will conveniently hold twelve hundred persons, and its form and arrangement are such, that a pupil seated the farthest from the subject under dissection, can see all the demonstrations of the Professor as well as if placed near the marble table.

In one wing of the building is an *Hospice de Perfectionnement*, formerly instituted for the reception of rare chirurgical cases only; but into which other patients, labouring under internal disorders of an extraordinary nature, are now likewise admitted.

To this school are attached from twenty to thirty Professors, who lecture on anatomy and physiology; medical chemistry and pharmacy; medical physics; pathology, internal and external; natural history, as connected with medicine, and botany; operative medicine; external and internal clinical cases, and the modern improvements in treating them; midwifery, and all disorders incident to women; the physical education of children; the history of medicine, and its legitimate practice; the doctrine of Hippocrates, and history of rare cases; medical bib-

liography, and the demonstration of the use of drugs and chirurgical instruments. There are also a chief anatomist, a painter, and a modeller in wax. The lectures are open to the public as well as to the students, who are said to exceed a thousand. Besides this part of instruction, the pupils practise anatomical, chirurgical, and chemical operations. To the number of one hundred and twenty, they form a practical school, divided into three classes, and are successively distributed into three of the clinical hospitals in Paris. At an annual competition, prizes are awarded to the greatest proficients.

Although this school is so numerously attended, and has produced several skilful professors, celebrated anatomists, and a multitude of distinguished pupils, yet it appears that, since there has been no regular admission for physicians and surgeons, the most complete anarchy has prevailed in the medical line. The towns and villages in France are overrun by quacks, who deal out poison and death with an audacity which the existing laws are unable to check. Under the title of *Officiers de Santé*, they impose on the credulity of the public, in the most dangerous manner, by the distribution of nostrums for every disorder. To put a stop to this alarming evil, it is in contemplation to promulgate a law, enacting that no one shall in-

future practise in France as a physician or surgeon, without having been examined and received into one of the six Special Schools of Medicine, or as an officer of health, without having studied a certain number of years, walked the hospitals, and also passed a regular examination.*

At the medical school of Paris are held the meetings of the

SOCIETY OF MEDICINE.

It was instituted for the purpose of continuing the labours of the *ci-devant* Royal Society of Medicine and the old Academy of Surgery. With this view, it is charged to keep up a correspondence, not only with the medical men resident within the limits of the Republic, but also with those of foreign countries, respecting every object that can tend to the progress of the art of healing.

As far back as the year 1777, there existed in Paris a college of Pharmacy. The apothecaries, composing this college, had formed, at their own expense, an establishment for instruction relative to the curative art, in their laboratory and garden in the *Rue de l'Arbalêtre*,

* A law to this effect is now made.

Since the revolution, the acknowledged utility of this institution has caused it to be maintained under the title of the

GRATUITOUS SCHOOL OF PHARMACY.

Here are delivered *gratis*, by two professors in each department, public lectures on pharmaceutic chemistry, pharmaceutic natural history, and botany. When the courses are finished, prizes are annually distributed to the pupils who distinguish themselves most by their talents and knowledge.

In the year 1796, the apothecaries of Paris, animated by a desire to render this establishment still more useful, formed themselves into a society, by the name of the

FREE SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES.

Its object is to contribute to the progress of the arts and sciences, particularly pharmacy, chemistry, botany, and natural history. This society admits, as free and corresponding associates, *savans* of all the other departments of France and of foreign countries, who cultivate those sciences and others analogous to them. Some of the most enlightened men in France are to be found among its members.

The advantageous changes made in the teaching of medicine, since the revolution, appear to consist chiefly in the establishment of clinical lectures. The teaching of the sciences, accessory to medicine, partakes more or less advantageously of the great progress made in that of chemistry. It seems that, in general, the students in medicine grant but a very limited confidence to accredited opinions, and that they recur to observation and experience much more than they did formerly. As for the changes which have occurred in the practice of medicine, I think it would be no easy matter to appreciate them with any degree of exactness. Besides, sufficient time has not yet elapsed since the establishment of the new mode of teaching, for them to assume a marked complexion. It is, however, to be observed that, by the death of the celebrated DÉSAULT, Surgery has sustained a loss which is not yet repaired, nor will be perhaps for ages.

LETTER LXXIX.

Paris, March 12, 1802.

FROM the account I have given you of the Public Schools here, you will have perceived that,

since the revolution, nothing has been neglected which could contribute to the mental improvement of the male part of the rising generation. But as some parents are averse to sending their children to these National Schools, there are now established in Paris a great number of

PRIVATE SEMINARIES

FOR YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES.

Several of these are far superior to any that previously existed in France, and are really of a nature to excite admiration, when we consider the cruel divisions which have distracted this country. But it seems that if, for a time, instruction, both public and private, was suspended, no sooner were the French permitted to breathe than a sudden and salutary emulation arose among those who devoted themselves to the important task of conducting these private schools. The great advantage which they appear to me to have over establishments of a similar description in England, is that the scholars are perfectly grounded in whatever they are taught; the want of which, among us, occasions many a youth to forget the greater part of what he has learned long before he has attained the years of manhood.

If several of the schools for boys here are extremely well conducted, some of those for

girls appear to be governed with no less care and judgment. In order to be enabled to form an opinion on the present mode of bringing up young girls in France, I have made a point of investigating the subject. I shall, in consequence, endeavour to shew you the contrast which strikes me to have occurred here in

FEMALE EDUCATION.

In France, convents had, at all times, prior to the revolution, enjoyed the exclusive privilege of bringing up young women; and some families had, for a century past, preserved the habit of sending all their daughters to be St. Ursulas, in order to enter afterwards into the world as virtuous wives and tender mothers. The natural result was, that, if the principles of excessive piety which had been communicated to them remained deeply engraved in their heart, they employed the whole day in the duties required by the catholic religion; and the confessor who dictated all these habitual practices, not unfrequently became the director of the temporal concerns of the family, as well as the spiritual. If the young girls, in emerging from the cells of a convent, were disposed to lay aside their religious practices, in order to adopt the customs and pleasures of the world, this sudden transition, from one extreme to the other,

made them at once abandon, not only the puerile minutiæ, but also the sacred principles of religion. There was no medium. They either became outrageous devotees, and, neglecting the respectable duties of housewives and mistresses of a family, wrapped themselves up in a great hood, and were incessantly on their knees before the altars of the churches, or, on the other hand, rushed into extravagance and dissipation, and, likewise, deserting a family which claimed their care, dishonoured themselves by the licentiousness of their manners.

At the present time, many women of good abilities and character, deprived of their property by the vicissitudes of the revolution, have established, in Paris and its environs, seminaries, where young girls receive such advice as is most useful to females who are destined to live in the world, and acquirements, which, by employing them agreeably several hours in the day, contribute to the interior happiness of their family, and make them find charms in a domestic life. In short, the superiority of female education in France is decidedly in favour of the present system, whether considered in regard to mental improvement, health, or beauty. With respect to the morals inculcated in these modern French boarding-schools, the best answer to all the prejudices which might be entertained against them, is that

the men, who have married women there educated, find that they prove excellent wives, and that their accomplishments serve only to embellish their virtues.

LETTER LXXX.

Paris, March 14, 1802.

I PLEAD guilty to your censure in not having yet furnished you with any remarks on the origin of this capital; but you will recollect that I engaged only to give you a mere sketch; indeed, it would require more time and talent than I can command to present you with a finished picture. I speak of things just as they happen to occur to my mind; and provided my letters bring you acquainted with such objects here as are most deserving of attention, my purpose will be fully accomplished. However, in compliance with your pressing request, I shall now briefly retrace the

PROGRESSIVE AGGRANDISEMENT OF PARIS.

Without hazarding any vague conjectures, I may, I think, safely affirm that Cæsar is the first historian who makes mention of this city. In the seventh book of his Commentaries, that

conqueror relates that he sent his lieutenant Labienus towards Lutetia; this was the name given by the Gauls to the capital of the Parisii. It was then entirely contained within that island on the Seine, which, at the present day, is called *l'Ile du Palais.*

In comparison to the capitals of the other provinces of Gaul, *Lutetia* was but a sorry village; its houses were small, of a round form, built of wood and earth, and covered with straw and reeds.

After having conquered *Lutetia*, the Romans embellished it with a palace, surrounded it by walls, and erected, at the head of each of the two bridges leading to it, a fortress, one of which stood on the site of the prison called *Le Grand Châtelet*; and the other, on that of *Le Petit Châtelet.* The Yonne, the Marne, and the Oise, being rivers which join the Seine, suggested the idea of establishing a trading company by water, in order to facilitate, by those channels, the circulation of warlike stores and provisions. These merchants were called *Nautæ Parisiaci.* The Romans also erected, near the left bank of the Seine, a magnificent palace and an aqueduct. This palace was called *Thermæ*, on account of its tepid baths.

Julian, being charged to defend Gaul against the irruptions of the barbarians, took up his

residence in these *Thermæ* in 360, two years before he was proclaimed emperor, in the square which was in front of this palace. "I was in "winter-quarters in my dear *Lutetia*," says he in his *Misopogon*. "Thus is named, in Gaul, the "little capital of the Parisii."—"It occupies," observes Abbon, "an inconsiderable island, sur- "rounded by walls, the foot of which is bathed "by the river. The entrance to it, on each "side, is by a wooden bridge."

Towards the middle of the fifth century, this city passed from the dominion of the Romans to that of the Francs. It was besieged by Childeric I. In 508, Clovis declared it the capital of his kingdom. The long stay which that prince made in it, contributed to its embellishment. Charlemagne founded in it a celebrated school. A little time after, another was established in the abbey of *St. Germain-des-Prés*. In the course of the ninth century, it was besieged and pillaged three times by the Normans.

Philip Augustus surrounded Paris with walls, and comprised in that inclosure a great number of small towns and hamlets in its vicinity. This undertaking occupied twenty years, having been begun in 1190, and finished in 1211. The same king was also the first who

caused the streets of this city to be paved. The wars of the English required new fortifications; and, under king John, ditches were dug round the city; and the *Bastille*, erected. These works were continued during the reigns of Charles V and Charles VI.

Francis I, the restorer of literature and of the arts, neglected nothing that might conduce to the farther embellishment of this capital. He caused several new streets to be made, many Gothic edifices to be pulled down, and was, in France, the first who revived Greek architecture, the remains of which, buried by the hand of time, or mutilated by that of barbarians, being collected and compared at Rome, began to improve the genius of celebrated artists, and, in the sequel, led to the production of masterpieces.

The kings, his successors, executed a part of the projects of that prince, and this extensive city imperceptibly lost its irregular and Gothic aspect. The removal of the houses, which, not long since, encumbered the bridges, and intercepted the current of air, has diffused cheerfulness and salubrity.

You will pardon me, I trust, if I here make a retrograde movement, not to recapitulate the aggrandisement of Paris, but to retrace rapidly

the progressive amelioration of the manners of its inhabitants. The latter paved the way to the former.

Under the first kings of France of the third race, justice was administered in a summary way; the king, the count, and the viscount heard the parties, and gave a prompt sentence, or else left the controversy to be decided by a pitched battle, if it was of too intricate a nature. No colleges then existed here; the clergy only keeping schools near the Cathedral of *Notre-Dame* for those who were intended for holy orders. The nobles piqued themselves on extreme ignorance, and as many of them could not even sign their own name, they dipped their glove in ink, and stamped it on the parchment as their signature. They lived on their estates, and if they were obliged to pass three or four days in town, they affected to appear always in boots, in order that they might not be taken for *vassals.* Ten men were sufficient for the collection of all the taxes. There were no more than two gates to the city; and under Lewis surnamed *le Gros,* from his corpulency, the duties at the north gate produced no more than twelve francs a year.

Philip Augustus, being fond of literature, welcomed and protected men of learning. It had appeared to revive under Charlemagne; but the

ravages of the Normans occasioned it to sink again into oblivion till the reign of Lewis the Young, father of Philip Augustus. Under the latter, the schools of Paris became celebrated; they were resorted to, not only from the distant provinces, but from foreign countries. The quarter, till lately called *l'Université*, became peopled; and, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was covered by colleges and monasteries. Philip the Fair rendered the Parliament sedentary. He prohibited duelling in civil contentions; and a person might have recourse to a court of justice. without being under the necessity of fighting. Anne de Bretagne, great and majestic in every thing, was desirous of having a court. Ladies who, till then, were born in one castle, only to marry and die in another, came to Paris. They were unwilling to leave it, and men followed them thither. All these circumstances increased its inhabitants to a thirtieth part beyond their former number.

The wars of religion under Charles IX and Henry III rendered gold and silver a little more common, by the profanations of the Calvinists, who pillaged the churches, and converted into specie the sacred vases, as well as the shrines and statues of saints. The vast sums of money which the court of Spain lavished in Paris, to support the League, had also diffused a certain

degree of affluence among no inconsiderable number of citizens; and it is to be remarked that, under Henry IV, several handsome streets were finished in less than a year.

Henry IV was the first of the kings of France who embellished Paris with regular squares, or open spaces, decorated with the different orders of architecture. After having nearly finished the *Pont Neuf*, he built the *Place Royale*, now called *Place des Fédérés*, and also the *Place Dauphine*.

Towards the end of the administration of Cardinal Richelieu, there no longer existed in France more than one master; and the petty tyrants in the provinces, who had fortified themselves so long in their castles against the royal authority, were seen to come to court, to solicit the most paltry lodging with all the servility of courtiers, and at the same time erect mansions in town with all the splendour of men inflated by pride and power. At last came the reign of Lewis XIV, and presently Paris knew no limits. Its gates were converted into arcs of triumph, and its ditches, being filled up and planted with trees, became public walks. When one considers the character of that monarch, it should seem that Paris ought to have been more embellished under his reign. In fact, had Lewis XIV expended on Paris one-fourth part of the money which he lavished on Ver-

sailles,* it would have become the most astonishing city in Europe.

However, its great extent and population, magnificent edifices, celebrated national establishments of learning and science, rich libraries, curious cabinets, where lessons of knowledge and genius present themselves to those who have a taste for them, together with its theatres and other places of public entertainment, have long rendered Paris deserving of the admiration of enlightened nations.

Before the revolution, Paris contained 46 parish churches, and 20 others answering the same purpose, 11 abbeys, and 133 monasteries or convents of men and women, 13 colleges, 15 public seminaries, and 26 hospitals. To these must be added the three royal habitations, the *Louvre*, the *Tuileries*, and the *Luxembourg*, also the *Hôtel des Invalides*, the *Palais Royal*, the *Palais Bourbon*, and a great number of magnificent hotels, inhabited by titled or wealthy persons.

Since the revolution, several of these buildings have been destroyed; almost all the monasteries and convents, together with the churches

* The article of lead alone for the water-pipes cost thirty-two millions of livres or £1,333,333 sterling; but

"Rich in her weeping country's spoils, Versailles!
"May boast a thousand fountains, that can cast
"The tortur'd waters to the distant heav'ns"—

belonging to them, have been sold as national property, and either demolished for the sake of the materials, or converted to different uses. Fifteen principal churches, besides the *Pantheon*, the *Invalides*, *Val-de-Grace*, the *Sorbonne*, and a few others, were preserved as national temples, intended for the celebration of *decadary fêtes*, and for a time rendered common to every sort of worship. Most of the old churches were of Gothic architecture, and not much to be commended with respect to art; but several of them were models of boldness, from the lightness of their construction.

The colleges, as I have before observed, are replaced by public schools and private seminaries of every description. The number of the houses in Paris, many of which are from five to eight stories in height, has been estimated at upwards of 80,000. The number of its inhabitants appears to have been over-rated. By an official statement, in which foreigners are not included, it contains no more than 630,000 souls.

During the last year of the republican era, the number of males born in Paris was 9296; and that of females, 9177; making the general total of births 18,473, of which the males, born out of wedlock, amounted to 1792; and the females, to 1852. The number of persons deceased, within the same period, was 10,446 males, and 10,301

females; making together 20,747. The annual decrease in population was consequently 2274 souls. The number of marriages was 3826; and that of divorces, 720; which is nearly 2 out of 11.

The ancient division of Paris consisted of three parts; namely, *La Cité*, *l'Université*, and *La Ville*. *La Cité* comprised all the *Ile du Palais*. This is the parent-stock of the capital, whence have extended, like so many branches, the numerous quarters by which it is surrounded. *L'Université* was bordered by the Seine, the *Faubourg St. Bernard*, *St. Victor*, *St. Marcel*, *St. Jacques*, and the *Faubourg St. Germain*. The number of colleges in this quarter, had obtained it the name of *Le Pays Latin*. *La Ville* comprehended all the rest of the capital, not included in the suburbs.

At present, Paris is divided into twelve mayoralties (as you will see by the *Plan)*, each of which is presided by a central office of municipal police. The *Faubourgs* retain their ancient names; but those of many of the streets have been changed in the course of the revolution. The *Chaussée d'Antin*, which comprises the new streets north of the *Boulevard Italien*, is now the most fashionable part of the town. The houses here are chiefly inhabited by bankers and persons living in affluence; and apartments in this neighbourhood are considerably dearer than in the *Faubourg St. Germain*, which, comparatively speaking, is deserted.

I have already described the *Porte St. Denis* and the *Porte St. Martin*, which are nothing more than arcs of triumph. In proportion as the limits of the capital became extended, the real gates were removed, but reappeared under the name of *barrières*. These costly edifices were constructed during the ministry of CALONNE, under the direction of LEDOUX, the architect, who has taken a pleasure in varying their form and character. One represents an observatory; another, a chapel; some have the appearance of rusticated buildings; others, that of temples. Under the old *régime* too, the farmers-general had inclosed Paris with a high wall, the extent of which has been estimated at upwards of 10,000 toises. This wall displeased the eye of the Parisians, and, when they were out of humour, induced them to murmur loudly. Whence the following *jeu de mots:*

"*Le mur, murant Paris, rend Paris murmurant.*"

During the revolution, it was by no means uncommon to shut the *barrières*, in order to serve the purposes of party, and favour the arrest of particular persons. To the number of sixty, they are placed at the principal outlets of the suburbs, and occupied by custom-house officers, whose business is to collect duties, and watch that no contraband goods find their way into the city. Formerly, when every carriage

entering Paris was stopped and examined (which is not the case at present), the self-importance of these *commis des barrières* could be equalled only by their ignorance.

A traveller arriving from Egypt brought with him a mummy. The case being long, he chose not to fasten it on to his post-chaise, but sent it to Paris by water. When it was landed at the *barrière*, the custom-house officers opened it, and, finding it to contain a black-looking body, decided that this was a man who had been baked in an oven. They took the linen bandages for his burnt shirt, and, after drawing up a *procès-verbal* in due form, sent the mummy to the *Morne*, where dead bodies are exposed in order to be owned. When the proprietor reached Paris, he went to the *barrière* to claim his mummy. The *commis* listened to him and stared at him with astonishment. He grew angry, and at length broke out into a violent passion; when one of the searchers, in a whisper, advised him to decamp, if he wished to avoid the gallows. The traveller, stupified, was obliged to apply to the Minister of the Police, and, with some difficulty, recovered from the *Morne* his Egyptian prince or princess, who, after having been preserved 2000 years, was on the point of being buried in a catholic cemetery, instead of figuring in a cabinet of curiosities.

LETTER LXXXI.

Paris, March 17, 1802.

An object which must infallibly strike the eye of the attentive observer, who has not visited this capital within the last ten years, is the change in the style of

FRENCH FURNITURE.

This remark may, at first sight, appear trivial; but a second view of the subject will produce reflections on the frivolity of this people, even amidst their intestine commotions, and at the same time shew that they are, in no small degree, indebted to the influence of those events for the taste which is to be distinguished in the new productions of their industry, and, in general, for the progress they have made, not only in the mechanical arts, but also in the sciences of every description. This will appear the more extraordinary, as it should seem natural to presume that the persecution which the protectors of the arts and sciences experienced, in the course of the revolution, was likely to produce quite a contrary effect. But the man of science and the artist, each abandoned to himself, acquired, in that forlorn situation, a

knowledge and a taste which very frequently are the result of long study only, seconded by encouragement from the wealthy.

The apartments of the fine ladies, of the rich, of the bankers, and merchants in Paris, and generally speaking, of all those who, from their business and connexions, have most intercourse with the public and with foreigners, are furnished in the modern mode, that is, in the antique taste. Many of the French artists, being destitute of employment, were compelled through necessity to seek it; some entered into the warehouse of the upholsterer to direct the shape and disposition of his hangings; some, into the manufactory of the paper-maker to furnish him with new patterns; and others, into the shop of the cabinet-maker to sell him sketches of antique forms. Had the easels of these artists been occupied by pictures no sooner finished than paid for, the Grecian bed would not have expelled the *lit à la Polonaise*, in vogue here before the revolution; the Etruscan designs would not have succeeded to the Chinese paper; nor would the curtains with Persian borders have been replaced by that elegant drapery which retraces the pure and simple taste of the people of Attica.

The elegant forms of the modern French *secrétaires*, commodes, chairs, &c. have also been

copied from the Greeks and Romans. The ornaments of these are either bronzed or gilt, and are uncommonly well finished. In general, they represent heads of men, women, and animals, designed after the antique. Caryatides are sometimes introduced, as well as Egyptian attributes; the arms of the chairs being frequently decorated with sphinxes. In short, on entering the residence of a *parvenu*, you would fancy yourself suddenly transported into the house of a wealthy Athenian; and these new favourites of Fortune can, without crossing the threshold of their own door, study chaste antiquity, and imbibe a taste for other knowledge, connected with it, in which they are but little versed.

Mahogany is the wood employed for making these modern articles of furniture, whose forms are no less varied than elegant; advantages which cause them to be preferred to the ancient. But the latter, though heavy in their construction, are, nevertheless, thought, by some persons, superior to the former in point of solidity and convenience. The old-fashioned bedsteads and chairs are generally of oak, painted or gilt, and are covered with silk or tapestry of different patterns. The *ci-devant* nobles appear to be greatly attached to them, and preserve them as monuments which supply the place of the titles and parchments they were forced to burn du-

ring the sanguinary periods of the revolution. But this taste is not exclusive; several of the Parisian *bourgeois*, either from economy, or from a wish to appear to have belonged to that class, shew no less eagerness to possess these spoils of the *noblesse*, as furniture for their apartments.

While I am speaking of furniture, it naturally occurs to me that I have not yet taken you to visit

LES GOBELINS.

This national manufactory, which is situated in the *Faubourg St. Marcel*, takes its name from two famous Flemish dyers, who settled in Paris under Francis I. In 1662, COLBERT purchased part of the old premises where the *Gobelins* had carried on their business, and there opened an establishment under the direction of LE BRUN. It was not confined to the manufacture of tapestry only, but was composed of painters, sculptors, engravers, goldsmiths, watchmakers, lapidaries, and other artists and workmen of almost every description, whose pupils and apprentices here acquired their freedom.

Since the revolution, tapestry alone is manufactured here, on two sorts of looms, distinguished by the denominations of *haute* and *basse lisse*, which are fully explained in an interesting *Notice*, published by the intelligent director,

GUILLAUMOT, who, it seems, has introduced into each of these branches several recent improvements.

The art of making tapestry originated in England and Flanders, where the cartoons of RAPHAEL and JULIO ROMANO were coarsely copied. It was gradually improved in France, and is now brought here to the greatest perfection. Indeed, a piece of *Gobelin* tapestry may be called a picture painted with wool and silk; but its admirable execution produces an illusion so complete, that skilful painters have been seen to lay their hands on this tapestry, to convince themselves that it was not a real painting.

Tapestry is now entirely out of fashion; and, with the exception of a few small fancy-pieces, the productions of this manufactory are intended solely for the decoration of the national palaces and other public buildings. In 1790, the bloodthirsty MARAT strove hard to annihilate this establishment, by exaggerating the expenses of its maintenance. In 1789, their real amount was 144,000 francs; 116 journeymen and 18 apprentices were then employed, and paid in proportion to their merit and to the quantity of work they performed. In 1791, they were divided into classes, and paid by the day. This regulation produces less work, but its execution is more perfect, since no motive of interest in-

duces the workman to neglect his performance. At present, its expenses cannot be so great, as the number of persons employed is less than 100. Should the penury of the finances not allow the means of re-establishing pupils, this manufactory will be extinguished like a lamp for want of oil. Twenty years are necessary to make a good manufacturer of tapestry; those of the first abilities are now nearly 70 years of age, and therefore it seems high time to prepare for them competent successors.

At *Chaillot*, we shall find another national manufactory, somewhat analogous to the former, and which also claims the attention of the curious observer. From having been fixed in a place originally occupied by a soap-house, it is called

LA SAVONNERIE.

It was established, as far back as 1615, at the instigation of Pierre Dupont, who, being forced to quit his native land by the civil commotions arising from the League, went to the Levant. Having seen carpets made without taste or design in that country, he conceived the idea of introducing a manufactory of this kind into France, where it would be susceptible of considerable improvement from the exercise of the arts unknown in Turkey. The project was

approved by Henry IV, who first gave DUPONT an establishment in the *Louvre*, which was afterwards transferred to its present situation.

Like the *Gobelins*, the national manufactory of the *Savonnerie* is, and has been, constantly supported by the government, and like it too, contributes to the decoration of the national palaces, &c. Nothing, in the shape of carpets, can answer this purpose better than those manufactured here, the colours of which are extremely brilliant. The close, velvety texture of the manufacture gives a peculiar expression to objects which are copied from nature, such as the hair of animals, the down of fruit, and the lustre of flowers.

From its foundation till the year 1789, this manufactory continued to be under the direction of a contractor, who delivered the carpeting to the government at the rate of 220 francs per square ell. At the revolution, new regulations were established; the workmen were paid by the day, and classed according to their merit. In consequence, though less work is performed, it is executed with greater perfection.

The present government has lately ordered the old patterns, which were overloaded with ornaments and flowers, to be suppressed, and replaced by compositions more simple, more elegant, and infinitely more tasteful. I understand

that the workmen are to be put to task-work, under the superintendance of the respectable administrator, DUVIVIER, who informs me that the present price of this carpeting amounts to 300 francs per square *mètre (circa* 3 ft. 3 inc. English measure). In 1789, thirty persons were employed here, at from 30 to 50 *sous* a day. At present, there are no more than twenty, who daily earn, on an average, 3 francs, and are lodged in the buildings of the manufactory.

Before I lay down my pen, I shall notice a national establishment, equally connected with the subject of this letter; I mean the

MANUFACTORY OF PLATE-GLASS.

Like all the other French manufactories, this has suffered from the revolution and the war; but it has now nearly resumed its former activity, owing to the effects of the peace and the laudable exertions of the government to revive commerce. At this time, it gives employment to about 600 persons.

Before COLBERT founded the present establishment, which is situated in the *Rue de Reuilli, Faubourg St. Antoine,* the French drew their plate-glass from Venice; but they have left their masters in this branch very far behind them, and now make mirrors of dimensions of which the Venetians had no idea. These plates are cast at St.

Gobin, near La Fère, in the department of L'Aisne, and sent to Paris to be polished and silvered. Here you may witness the process employed in each of these different operations.

A method of joining together two small plates of glass in such a manner that no mark appears, has, I am informed, been lately discovered in Paris. It is said, however, not to be applicable to those of large dimensions. After the operation of this species of soldering, the plates are silvered.

LETTER LXXXII.

Paris, March 19, 1802.

As the period of my stay here is drawing rapidly towards a conclusion, I find much less leisure for writing; otherwise I should, in my last letter, have made you acquainted with an establishment not irrelevant to the leading subject of it, and which, when completed, cannot fail to attract general notice and admiration.

Every one has heard of the PIRANESI. In the year 1800, PIETRO and FRANCESCO, the surviving sons of the celebrated GIOVANNI-BATTISTA, transported to France their immense collection of drawings, with all their plates and en-

gravings. They were welcomed, protected, and encouraged by the French government. Anxious to give to these ingenious artists every facility for the success of an undertaking that they had conceived, it has granted to them the spacious and handsome premises of the *ci-devant Collège de Navarre*, in the *Rue de la Montagne St. Geneviève*, which the PIRANESI will shortly open as an

ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS.

That ancient college is extremely well calculated for such a destination, from the extent of its buildings, its remoteness from noise, and the airiness of its situation. By this liberal conduct to the PIRANESI, the French government has shewn the warm interest it takes in the progress of those arts. The establishment of these Romans is to be divided into three branches. The first is placed in the *Collège de Navarre*; the second is to be in the *Palais du Tribunat*; and the third, at *Morfontaine*.

Three hundred artists of different nations, some of whom are known by master-pieces, while others announce the genius necessary for producing them, are to be distributed in the seven classes of this academy, which include the fine arts of every description. Each artist being at liberty to follow the branch to which he

is most partial, it may easily be conceived how noble an emulation will be roused by such an assemblage of talents. Several are now employed here in the workshops of Painting, Sculpture, Mosaic, and Engraving. Let us see in what manner.

The ground-floor is devoted to Sculpture. Here are made, in plaster and *terra cotta*, models of the finest monuments of Greece and Italy, which are executed in marble of the richest species, such as porphyry, granite, red antique, Parian and Carrara marble. From the hands of the two CARDELLI, and other eminent artists, are seen to issue copies of the most magnificent bas-reliefs of ancient Rome, and the most beautiful friezes of RAPHAEL, MICHAEL ANGELO, JULIO ROMANO, and other great masters of the Italian school; tripods, obelisks, antique vases, articles of furniture in the Egyptian and Chinese taste, together with objects taken from nature, such as the most curious animals in the national *ménagerie*, likewise occupy their talents. All these subjects are executed in different sizes, and form, together or separately, decorations for apartments or tables, particularly pilasters and *plateaux*, in which the richness of the materials is surpassed by that of the workmanship.

On the same floor is the workshop of Mosaic. It is under the direction of BELLONI, who has invented methods, by means of which

he has introduced Mosaic into articles of furniture, and for the pavement of rich apartments, at prices far inferior to what might be imagined. The principle articles here exhibited, as specimens, are:—1. Superb marble tables and stands, in which are inserted ornaments and pictures in Mosaic, or incrustated in the Florentine manner—2. A large pavement, where the beauty and variety of the marbles are relieved by embellished incrustations—3. Small pictures, in which the painting, in very fine Mosaic, is raised on an even ground of one piece of black marble—4. Large tables, composed of specimens of fine-grained stones, such as jasper, agate, carnelion, lapis lazuli, &c. and also of valuable marbles, distributed into compartments and after a design imitated from the antique, and enriched with a few incrustated pictures, representing animals and flowers. Besides these, here are to be seen other essays of a kind entirely new. These are marbles, intended for furniture, coloured in an indelible manner. Sometimes the figures and ornaments in them are coloured in the ground; sometimes they are in colour, but raised on a ground of white marble.

On the first story is the workshop for Engraving. Here the artists are employed in engraving the seven hills of Rome, ancient circuses of that celebrated city, plans of the *fo-*

rum, obelisks of Rome and Egypt, ruins of Pompeia, drawn on the spot by the late J. B. PIRANESI, together with modern subjects, such as the splendid edifices of Paris, the beautiful views of the environs, the national fêtes, and every thing that can deservedly interest artists and persons of taste. On the same story are the plates of the PIRANESI calcography, the place where they are printed, and the warehouse where they are deposited. The engravings, now nearly executed, will form upwards of twenty volumes; and those begun will equal that number.

The second story is occupied by painters in oil-colours; the third, by those in water-colours; the fourth, by draughtsmen in Indian ink and bistre; and the fifth serves for the lodging of the artists, particularly the most skilful among them, who direct the different branches of this establishment. The principal pile of building is crowned by a *Belvedere*, which commands an extensive view of Paris, and seems calculated for promoting the inspirations of genius. Here are copied, in oil, water-colours, Indian ink and bistre, the fresco paintings of RAPHAEL, MICHAEL ANGELO, and JULIO ROMANO; the Vatican, the Farnesian palace, the Villa Altoviti, and the Villa Lante alternately furnishing models no less happily chosen than carefully executed. The antiquities of Herculaneum, so

interesting from the knowledge they afford us of the customs of the ancient Romans, and from the elegant decorations of which they have procured us the models, the ruins of Palmyra and Balbeck, those of Greece and Sicily, together with views of Constantinople and of the country in which it is situated, are here rendered with the most exact truth, joined to the most harmonious colouring. Here too are represented, in the three manners before-mentioned, views and sites of Egypt, Greece, Italy, France, and all other countries; cascades, such as those of TERNI, NARNI, and TIVOLI; sea-pieces; landscapes, parks, and gardens; arabesques after RAPHAEL; new and picturesque plants; in a word, decorations formed of an assemblage of every thing most perfect in art and nature.

On the first and second stories are also two exhibition-rooms, for such pictures and works of sculpture as are finished, where the eye wanders agreeably amidst a crowd of objects of an enlivening or serious nature. Here it is that the amateur, after having seen the artists at work in the classes of this academy, fixes his choice on the kind of production which most takes his fancy. These two rooms contain the different articles which are afterwards to be displayed in the two porticos of the *Palais du Tribunat*.

Those elegant and spacious porticos, situated in the most centrical part of Paris, facing the *Rue St. Honoré*, have likewise been granted to the PIRANESI through the special favour of the government. Not only all the productions of their establishment, but also the principal master-pieces in painting, sculpture, and architecture, produced by artists of all nations, will there be exhibited; so that those porticos will present, as it were, an Encyclopædia of the Fine Arts.*

* The principal protector of the undertaking of the PIRANESI is JOSEPH BONAPARTE, who has not confined himself to assisting them in the capital. Being desirous to introduce the arts into the country where he passes the finest season of the year, and to promote the discovery of the PIRANESI, relative to the properties of the argill found at *Morfontaine*, he has given to them for several years the use of a large building and a very extensive piece of ground, ornamented with bowers, where all the subjects modelled at the *Collège de Navarre*, in *terra cotta* or in porcelain of *Morfontaine*, undergo the process of baking. In the last-mentioned place, the PIRANESI purpose to establish a foundery for sculpture in bronze and other metals. The government daily affords to them encouragement and resources which insure the success of their establishment. To its other advantages are added a library, and a printing-office.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Paris, March 22, 1802.

As to the mechanical arts, if you are desirous to view some of the modern improvements and inventions in that line, you must accompany me to the *Rue St. Martin*, where, in the *ci-devant* priory, is an establishment of recent date, entitled the

CONSERVATORY OF ARTS AND TRADES.

Here is a numerous collection of machines of every description employed in the mechanical arts. Among these is the *belier hydraulique*, newly invented by MONTGOLFIER, by means of which a stream of water, having a few feet of declivity, can be raised to the top of a house by a single valve or sucker, so disposed as to open, to admit the water, and shut, when it is to be raised by compression. By increasing the compression, it can be raised to 1000 feet, and may be carried to a much greater elevation. The commissioners appointed by the Institute to examine this machine, reported that it was new, very simple, very ingenious, and might be extremely useful in turning to account little streams of water for the purposes of agriculture, manufactories, &c.

This reminds me of another singular hydraulic machine, of which I have been informed by a person who attended a trial made of it not long since in Paris.

A basin placed at the height of twenty feet, was filled with water, the fall of which set in motion several wheels and pumps that raised the water again into the basin. The machine was fixed in a place, glazed on all sides, and locked by three different keys. It kept in play for thirty-two days, without the smallest interruption; but the air, the heat, and the wood of the machine, having undoubtedly diminished the water, it no longer ascended into the basin. Till the thirty-second day, many persons imagined that the perpetual motion had been discovered. However, this machine was extremely light, well combined, and very simple in its construction. I ought to observe that it neither acted by springs nor counterpoise; all its powers proceeding from the fall of the water.

The conservatory also contains several models of curious buildings, too numerous to mention.

The mechanical arts in France appear to have experienced more or less the impulse given to the sciences towards the close of the eighteenth century. While calamities oppressed this country, and commerce was suspended, the inventive and fertile genius of the French was not dormant.

The clothiers have introduced woollen articles manufactured on a new plan; and their fine broad cloths and kerseymeres have attained great perfection. The introduction of the Spanish merinos into France has already produced in her wools a considerable amelioration.

Like a phœnix, Lyons is reviving from its ashes, and its silks now surpass, if possible, their former magnificence. Brocaded silk is at present made in a loom worked by one man only, in lieu of two, which the manufacture of that article hitherto demanded. Another new invention is a knitting-loom, by means of which 400 threads are interwoven with the greatest exactness, by merely turning a winch.

The cotton manufactures are much improved, and the manufactories in that line are daily increasing in number and perfection. A new spinning-machine has produced here, I am told, 160,000 ells in length out of a pound of cotton. The fly-shuttle is now introduced into most of the manufactories in this country, and 25 pieces of narrow goods are thus made at once by a single workman. In adopting ARKWRIGHT's system, the French have applied it to small machines, which occupy no more room than a common spinning-wheel.

Among other branches in which the French mechanics have particularly distinguished them-

selves, since the revolution, is the making of astronomical and philosophical instruments.

All the machines used here in coining have also been modified and improved. By one of these, the piece is struck at the same time on the edge and on the flat side in so perfect a manner, that the money thus coined cannot be counterfeited.

I have already mentioned the invention of a composition which supplies the place of black lead for pencils, and the discovery of a new and very expeditious method of tanning leather.

New species of earthen-ware have been invented, and those already known have received considerable improvement.

Chemists have put the manufacturers in possession of new means of decomposing and recomposing substances. Muriat of tin is now made here with such economy, that it is reduced to one-eighth of its former price. This salt is daily used in dying and in the manufacture of printed calicoes. Carbonates of strontia and of baryt, obtained by a new process, will shortly be sold in Paris at 3 francs the *kilogramme*. This discovery is expected to have a great influence on several important arts, such as the manufacture of glass, of soap, &c.

Articles of furniture, jewellery, and every branch dependent on design, are now remark-

able for a purer taste than that which they formerly exhibited.

Indeed, the characteristic difference of the present state of French industry, and that in which it was before the revolution, is that most of the proprietors of the manufactories have received a scientific education. At that time, many of them were strangers to the principles applicable to the processes of their art; and, in this respect, they lay at the mercy of the routine, ignorance, and caprice of their workmen. At present, the happy effects of instruction, more widely-diffused, begin to be felt, and, in proportion as it is extended, it excites a spirit of emulation which promises no small advantage to French commerce.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Paris, March 23, 1802.

In the richness of her territory, the abundance of her population, the activity of her inhabitants, and the knowledge comprised in her bosom, France possesses great natural advantages; but the effect which they might have produced on her industry, has been counteracted by the errors of her old government, and the

calamities attendant on the revolution. Some public-spirited men, thinking the moment favourable for restoring to them all their influence, have lately met; and from this union has sprung the

Society for the encouragement of NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

It is formed on a scale still more extensive than the *Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, instituted at London. Its meetings are held in the *Louvre*; but, though fixed in the metropolis, it embraces the whole extent of the Republic, and every department will participate in the benefits which it proffers.

The chief objects of this society are: To collect, from all quarters, discoveries and inventions useful to the progress of the arts; to bestow annually premiums and gratuitous encouragements; to propagate instruction, by disseminating manuals on different objects relative to the arts, by combining the lights of theory with the results of practice, and by constructing at its own expense, and disseminating among the public in general, and particularly in the manufactories, such machines, instruments, and apparatus as deserve to be more generally known and brought into use; to make essays and experiments for ascertaining the utility which

may be expected from new discoveries; to make advances to artists who may be in distress, or deficient in the means to put in practice the processes of their inventions; to unite by new ties all such persons as from their situation in life, their taste, or their talents, feel an interest in the progress of the arts; to become the centre of similar institutions, which are called for in all the principal manufacturing-towns of the Republic; in a word, to *excite emulation, diffuse knowledge, and assist talents.*

To attain these objects, various committees, consisting of men the most conversant in knowledge relative to the arts, are already appointed, and divide among them *gratuitously* the whole of the labour.

This society, founded, on principles so purely patriotic, will, no doubt, essentially second the strenuous efforts of the government to reanimate the different branches of national industry. The free and spontaneous concurrence of the men of whom it is composed, may unite the power of opinion to that of other means; and public opinion produces naturally that which power and authority obtain only by a slow and difficult progress.

But, while those branches of industry, more immediately connected with the arts, are stimulated by these simultaneous encouragements, that

science, on the practice of which depends the welfare of States, is not neglected. Independently of the Council of Agriculture, Commerce and Arts, established under the presidency of the Minister of the Interior, here is a

FREE SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURE.

Its object is to improve agriculture, not only in the department of La Seine, but throughout France. For this purpose, it maintains a regular correspondence with all the agricultural societies of the other departments. It publishes memoirs, in which are inserted the results of its labours, as well as the notices and observations read at the meetings by any one of its members, and the decision which has followed.

Every year it proposes prizes for the solution of some question important to the amelioration of agriculture.

What, at first view, appears extraordinary, is not, on that account, less founded on truth. Amidst the storms of the revolution, agriculture has been improved in France. At a period of happiness and tranquillity, the soil was not so well cultivated as in times of terror and mourning; because, during the latter, the lands enjoyed the franchises so long wanted. Hands never failed; for, when the men marched to the armies, women sup-

plied their place; and no one was ashamed to handle the spade or the plough.

However, if, in 1789, agriculture in France was far from a state of prosperity, it was beginning to receive new light from the labours of the agricultural societies. That of Paris had given a great impulse to the culture of artificial meadows, potatoes, hemp, flax, and fruit-trees. Practical directions, spread with profusion in the country, had diverted the inhabitants from the routine which they had blindly followed from generation to generation.

Before the revolution, the French began to imitate us in gelding their horses, and giving to their lackies, their coachmen, and their equipages an English appearance; instead of copying us in the cultivation of our land, and adopting the principles of our rural economy. This want of foresight they are now anxious to repair, by increasing their pastures, and enriching them by an extensive variety of plants, augmenting the number of their cattle, whether intended for subsistence or reproduction, and improving the breed by a mixture of races well assorted, procuring a greater quantity of manure, varying their culture so as not to impoverish the soil, and separating their lands by inclosures, which obviate the necessity of constantly employing herdsmen to tend their cattle.

Agriculture has, unquestionably, suffered much, and is still suffering in the western departments. Notwithstanding the succour afforded by the government to rebuild and repair the deserted cottages and barns, to supply them with men and cattle, to set the ploughs to work, and revive industry, it is still evident that the want of confidence which maintains the value of money at an exorbitant rate, the love of stock-jobbing, the impossibility of opening small loans, the excessive price of manual labour, contributions exacted in advance, and the distress of most of the land-owners, who are not in a condition to shew favour to their tenants, are scourges which still overwhelm the country. But I am credibly informed that, in general, the rural inhabitants now lend a more attentive ear to instruction, and that prejudices have less empire over their reason. The great landed proprietors, whom terror had induced to fly their country, have, on recovering possession of their patrimony, converted their parks into arable land. Others, who are not fond of living in town, are daily repairing to their estates, in order to superintend the cultivation of them. No one disdains the simple title of farmer. Old publications relative to agriculture are reprinted in a form more within reach of the capacity of the people; though treatises on domestic animals are still much wanted.

At Rambouillet, formerly the country-seat of the duke of Penthièvre, is an experimental national farm. Fine cattle are now held in high estimation. Flocks of sheep of the Spanish breed are daily increasing; and the number of those of a pure race, already imported, or since bred in France, exceeds 8000.* Wide roads, which led to one solitary castle only, have been ploughed, and sown. The rage for ornamental gardens and pleasure-grounds is dying away. The breeding of horses, a branch of industry which the war and the requisition had caused to be abandoned, is on the point of being resumed with increased activity. It is in contemplation to establish studs, on plans better combined and much more favourable to the object than those which formerly existed. In short, the ardent wish of the thinking part of the nation seems to be, that the order which the government is endeavouring to introduce into every branch of its administration, may determine the labourer to proportion his hire to the current price of corn; but all these truths assembled form not such a sketch as you may, perhaps, expect. The state of French agriculture has never yet been delineated on a comprehensive scale, except by

* At the last annual sale at Rambouillet, the average price of a good Spanish ram was no more than 412 francs or £17 sterling. The dearest sold for 620 francs.

Arthur Young. You must persuade him to repeat his tour, if you wish for a perfect picture.*

March 22, in continuation.

Most persons are acquainted with DIDOT's stereotypic editions of the classics, &c. which are sold here for 15 *sous* per copy. Nothing more simple than the plan of this mode of printing. A page is first set up in moveable types; a mould or impression is then taken of the page with any suitable plastic substance, and a solid page is cast from it. The expense of a solid page exceeds not that of resetting it in moveable types; so that, by this invention, the price of books will be considerably reduced, and standard works will never be out of print. Nor are these the only advantages attending the use of stereotype; I must mention another of still greater importance.

By the common method of printing, it is im-

* The statistical accounts of the different departments, which are to be compiled by order of the Minister of the Interior, will specify all the agricultural improvements. The few already published, shew that if the population of France is somewhat diminished in the large towns, it is considerably increased in the country-places.

possible ever to have correct books. They are in the market before all their errors are discovered; and the latest edition of a work, which ought to be the most correct, is necessarily the most faulty; for it presents not only the errors of that from which it was copied, but also those peculiar to itself. Stereotypic books are printed only to answer the extent of the demand; and errors, when discovered, being corrected in the metal, they must, through time and attention, become immaculate; a circumstance of infinite importance in astronomical and mathematical tables of every description.*

* It is, however, to be remarked that the merit of this invaluable invention is not due to France, but to Britain. As far back as the year 1725, a Mr. GED, of Edinburgh, turned his thoughts to the formation of cast letter-press plates, and, in 1736, printed a stereotype edition of Sallust. Being opposed by a combination of printers and booksellers, whose ignorance and prejudices he was unable to overcome, he relinquished the prosecution of his discovery; and thus the stereotypic art was lost to the world, till rediscovered, in 1780, by Mr. ALEXANDER TILLOCH. In the year 1783, Mr. TILLOCH took out a patent for it, in conjunction with Mr. FOULIS, then printer to the University of Glasgow. They printed several books in this manner; but it seems that they also experienced an opposition from the booksellers, and, owing to different circumstances, have not since availed themselves of their patent. Notwithstanding this evidence of priority, the French dispute the invention; and the learned CAMUS, in his "*Historical Sketch of Polyty-*

For elegance of printing, DIDOT is the BENSLEY of Paris; but to see a grand establishment in this line, you must go to the *Rue de la Vrillière*, near the *Place des Victoires*, and visit the

PRINTING-OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC.

Under the title of *Imprimerie Royale*, this establishment was formerly placed in the galleries of the *Louvre*. Instituted by Francis I in 1531, it was greatly enlarged and improved under Lewis XIII and Lewis XIV. It has also been considerably augmented since its removal, in 1794, to the hotel belonging to the late Duke of Penthièvre, which it now occupies.

In its present state, it may be considered as the most extensive and most complete typographical establishment in being. Every branch relating to typography, from the casting of the type to the article of binding, is here united. The *dépôt* of punches contains upwards of 30,000 characters of all languages. Among others, here are to be remarked, in all their primitive purity, the beautiful Greek ones of

page and Stereotypage," affirms, on the authority of LOTTIN, that, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the stereotypic process was put in practice in France, for printing the calendars prefixed to the missals. Hence it is seen that the claim of the English is supported by positive proof; while that of the French rests on bare assertion.

Garamon, engraved by order of Francis I, and which served for the editions of the Stephen, the Byzantine, &c, the oriental characters of the Polyglot of Vitræus, and the collection of exotic characters from the printing-office of the Propaganda. The government business alone constantly employs one hundred presses. A much greater number can be set to work, if wanted.

Independently of the works concerning administration and the sciences, which are executed here at the public cost, the government allows authors to cause to be printed at this office, at their own private expense, such works as, on account of their importance, the difficulty of execution, and the particular types which they require, are entitled to that favour.

On applying to the director, the amateurs of typography are instantly admitted to view this establishment, and shewn every thing interesting in it, with that spirit of liberality which is extended to every public institution here, and which reflects the highest honour on the French nation.

LETTER LXXXV.

Paris, March 26, 1802.

In visiting a foreign country, and more especially its capital, the traveller, whose object is instruction, enters into the most minute details, in order to obtain a complete knowledge of the various classes of its inhabitants. As Seneca justly observes, in his epistles, what benefit can a person reap from his travels, who spends all his time in examining the beauty and magnificence of public buildings? Will the contemplation of them render him more wise, more temperate, more liberal in his ideas? Will it remove his prejudices and errors? It may amuse him for a time, as a child, by the novelty and variety of objects, which excite an unmeaning admiration. To act thus, adds the learned stoic, is not to travel, it is to wander, and lose both one's time and labour.

"*Non est hoc peregrinari, sed errare.*"

Wherefore Horace, in imitation of Homer, says, in praise of Ulysses,

"*Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, et urbes.*"

I have, I hope, given you enough of sights and shows; let us then, my good friend, follow the wise example of the ancients, and take a view of men and manners.

Owing, in some measure, to the levity of the French character, and the freedom which now prevails generally enough in all society here, this sort of study, sometimes so tedious, is greatly facilitated. In the Parisian assemblies of the present day, by an almost continual collision, self-love discovers the weak side of an individual whose whole merit consists in a little small-talk, and a rotation of those *jolis petits riens*, which, seconded by a well-favoured countenance and an agreeable carriage, have given him in the world the reputation of an amiable man; while, from another, we see a thousand essential qualities, concealed under a coarse exterior, force themselves into notice, and which his modesty, or more frequently his timidity, prevented him from displaying.

From the preceding preamble, you will naturally conclude that I purpose to appropriate this letter to a few remarks on the

PRESENT STATE OF SOCIETY IN PARIS.

In this city are three very distinct kinds of society. But the order I shall adopt in the description of each of them must not, in any way, lead you to prejudge my opinion respecting the rank which they hold among the French themselves. In this respect, I shall abstain from every sort of reflection, and, confining

myself to the simple character of a faithful narrator, shall leave to your sagacity to decide the question.

I shall begin by the society, chiefly composed of the *ci-devant noblesse*, several of whom, never having quitted France, have preserved some of their property; and of emigrants, lately returned to their own country, and who have enough remaining to allow them to have a household establishment, but in a very modest style indeed, compared to that which their rank and fortune enabled them to support before the revolution.

You present yourself at the residence of *Madame la Marquise de C——*. In the anti-room, you declare your name and quality to the groom of the chambers. Then, the opening of one or two folding-doors announces to the mistress of the house, and to the company, the *quantum* of the ceremonies which are to be paid to the newcomer. Keep your eye constantly on the *Marquise*; her behaviour will regulate yours in regard to the individuals who compose her party. In the course of conversation, take special care not to omit the title of the person to whom you address yourself. Such an instance of forgetfulness savours of a man of the new *régime*. Never pronounce the new denominations respecting the divisions of the French territory, the

months, the weights, measures, &c. Those words would draw on you an unfavourable interpretation. If you are inclined to hear a discussion on the arts and sciences, or on any new discovery whatever, you seldom find, in these parties, persons who can gratify your taste; though you may meet with many who, as Locke says, "know a little, presume a great deal, and so "jump to a conclusion."

From the plebeians, whose presence the *cidevant* nobles are so condescending as to endure, much obsequiousness and servility are required; and it is expected that the distance of rank should never be forgotten. But the learned or scientific French revolutionist, who admits no other distance than that between knowledge and ignorance, not choosing to submit to such conditions, seldom presents himself at the house of *Madame la Marquise de C——*. However, you will hear her company speak of the court of France, of the interest which each individual had there, and also a few anecdotes not uninteresting, and which will furnish you with some ideas of the brilliant parties there formed. After this discussion, one will talk to you of his regiment; another, of his hunting establishment, of his *châteaux*, of his estates, &c. *Chez Madame la Marquise de C——*, you will find no inconsiderable prepossession against every

thing that is not of the old order of things, and even some exclusive pretensions to manners which belong to those only who are real gentlemen. Yet, through all these absurdities, you will always see good-breeding prevail in this society, and the disposition which distinguishes a Frenchman from other polished nations, will here break forth and present itself to you in a striking manner.

While speaking of the *ci-devant noblesse*, I cannot forbear to mention the loss which those who had the happiness of her acquaintance, have sustained by the recent death of Madame DE CHOISEUL, the relict of the duke of that name, minister to Lewis XV. Her virtues shed such a lustre round her, that it reached even the monarch himself, who, when he banished her husband to Chanteloup, wrote to him: "I "should have sent you much further, but for "the particular esteem I have for Madame DE "CHOISEUL, in whose health I take no small "interest." This uncommonly-respectable woman will long be quoted and deservedly regretted, because she was modest in greatness, beneficent in prosperity, courageous in misfortune, pure in the vortex of corruption, solid in the midst of frivolity, as simple in her language as she was brilliant in her understanding, and

as indulgent to others as she was superior to them in grace and virtue.

I shall next lead you to the house of a *parvenu*, that is, one of those, who, from having made some successful speculations, and possessing a conscience not overnice as to the means of fixing Fortune, is enabled to live in the expensive style of the *ci-devant* court-lords and farmers-general. A letter changed in the person's name, not unfrequently a *de* or a *St.* added, (sometimes both) puzzles the curious, who endeavour to discover what was formerly M. *de St. H*——, now in the enjoyment of an annual income of a hundred thousand francs, or £4000 sterling.

At his house, more than any where else, etiquette is kept up with an extraordinary minuteness; and evil tongues will tell you that it is natural for M. *de St. H*—— to remember and avail himself of the observations which he had it in his power to make in the place he formerly occupied. Under his roof, you will find little of that ease and amiableness which are to be remarked in the other societies of Paris. Each individual is on his guard, and afraid of betraying himself by certain expressions, which the force of habit has not yet allowed him to forget. But if you are fond of good music, if

you take a pleasure in balls, and in the company of *femmes galantes* or demireps; and even if first-rate jugglers, ventriloquists, and mimics amuse you by their skilful performances, frequent the house of M. *de St H*——, and every day, or at least every day that he is at home, you will have a new entertainment.

Between the acts, the company make their remarks, each in his own way, on what they have just seen or heard. Afterwards, the conversation turns on the public funds. Little is said, however, on affairs of State, the bankruptcies of the day, and the profit which such or such a speculation might produce. The ladies, after having exhausted the subject of the toilet, finish by giving, as an apology for their own conduct, the charitable enumeration of the peccadilloes which they fancy they have remarked in other women.

So little am I disposed for gaming, that I forgot to mention *bouillotte*, *quinze*, and also whist and reversi, which are introduced at all these parties. But the two last-mentioned games are reserved for those only who seek in cards nothing more than a recreation from the occupations of the day. At the others, gain is the sole object of the player; and many persons sit at the gaming-table the whole night, and, in the depth of winter even, never leave it till the

"garish sun" warns them that it is time to withdraw.

I have now only to introduce you at M. *B*——'s, Counsellor of State. Here you will find the completion of the other two societies, and a very numerous party, which affords to every one a conversation analogous to his taste or his means. Refrain, however, from touching on politics; the French government, still in its infancy, resembles a young plant exposed to the inclemency of the air, and whose growth is directed by skilful hands. This government must remove, and even sometimes destroy every obstacle it meets with, and which may be prejudicial to the form and direction that it thinks proper to give to its branches and various ramifications. Beware, above all, of speaking of the revolution. That string is too delicate to be touched in regard to certain individuals of M. *B*——'s party, perhaps also in regard to himself: for the periods of the calamities which the French have undergone are still quite recent, and the parts that many of these persons may have acted, call to mind recollections too painful, which, for their tranquillity, ought ever to be buried in oblivion. And, in fact, you will always perceive, in the meetings of this class, a harmony, apparent indeed, but which surprises a stranger the more, as, of all the societies in Paris, it presents to

him the greatest medley in point of the persons who compose it.

In this society you will hear very instructive dissertations on the sciences, sound literature, the fine arts, mechanics, and the means of rendering useful the new discoveries, by applying them with economy to the French manufactories, either public or private: for M. *B*—— considers it as his duty to receive with distinction all the *savans*, and generally all those called men of talent. In this line of conduct, he follows the example set him by the government; and every one is desirous to appear a Mæcenas in the eyes of Augustus. In other respects, the house of M. *B*—— will afford you the agreeble pastimes which you have found at M. *de St. H*——*'s*.

In Paris, however, are several other societies which, to consider them rightly, are no more than a diminutive of those you have just left; but which, nevertheless, are of a character sufficiently distinct in their composition to justify their pretensions to be classed as well as the others. This difference proceeding chiefly from that of political opinions alone, an acquaintance with the great societies here will enable you to select those of the middle class which you may think proper to frequent, according to your taste, or your manner of seeing and judging of

the events of the French revolution. Yet, you must not hence conclude that the conversation turns chiefly on that subject in this particular class of the Parisian societies. They concern themselves less about it perhaps than the others, whether from the little share they have had in it, or because they have but very indirect connexions with the government, or lastly, and this final reason is, I believe, the most conclusive, because a Frenchman, from the nature of his character, ends by forgetting his misfortunes and losses, cares little for the future, and appears desirous to enjoy the present only; following, in that respect, the precept of La Fontaine:

> "*Jouis dès aujourd'hui, tu n'as pas tant à vivre*;
> "*Je te rebâts ce mot—car il vaut tout un livre.*"

In truth, although, among this people, vexations and enjoyments are almost always the result of imagination, they have preserved the remembrance of their misfortunes only to turn to account the terrible lessons which they have received from them, by adopting, in regard to the present and to the future, that happy philosophy which knows how to yield to the circumstances of the moment. This it is (you may rely on the fact) that has contributed, more than any other cause, to re-establish, in so short a period, the order and tranquillity

which France presents to the eyes of astonished foreigners. This it is too that has, in a great measure, obviated the fatal consequences which their past troubles must have made them fear for a long time to come, and for which few remedies could be expected, especially when we reflect on the divisions which the revolution has sown in almost every family in this country.

P. S. The sound of cannon, which strikes my ear at this moment, announces the signature of the definitve treaty. In the evening, a grand illumination will take place to celebrate the return of the most desirable of all blessings.

" ——————O beauteous Peace!
" Sweet union of a State! What else but thou
" Giv'st safety, strength, and glory to a people?"

LETTER LXXXVI.

Paris, March 28, 1802.

WHATEVER changes may have been introduced by the revolution, in one respect at least, the Parisians still preserve towards foreigners that urbanity for which they were remarkable half a century ago, when Sterne paid them a visit.

If you ask a shopkeeper here, of either sex, the way to a place, perhaps at some distance, he or she neglects the occupation of the moment to direct you, with as much solicitude and attention as though a considerable advantage was to be the result of the given information. It is the small sweet courtesies of life, as that sentimental traveller remarks, which render the road of it less rugged.

Sometimes, indeed, a foreigner pays dearly for the civility shewn him in Paris; but, in laying out his money, he must ever bear in mind that the shopkeepers make no scruple to overcharge their articles to their own countrymen, and some will not blush to take, even from them, a third less than the price demanded.

Soon after my arrival here, I think I mentioned to you the excessive dearness of

FURNISHED LODGINGS.

Since the revolution, their price is nearly doubled, and is extremely high in the most fashionable parts of the town, such as the *Chaussée d'Antin*, the *Rue de la Loi*, the *Rue de la Concorde*, &c. For strangers that know not in Paris any friend who will take the trouble to seek for them suitable apartments, the only way to procure good accommodation is to alight at a ready-furnished hotel, and there hire

rooms by the day till they can look about them, and please themselves.

For my own part, I prefer the quiet of a private lodging to the bustle of a public hotel, and, as I have before mentioned, my constant resource, on such occasions, has been the *Petites Affiches*. If you go to the office where this Daily Advertiser is published, and inspect the file, it is ten to one that you immediately find apartments to your wishes.

A single man may now be comfortably lodged here, in a private house with a *porte-cochère*, at from 5 to 8 louis per month; and a small family may be well accommodated, in that respect, at from 12 to 16 louis. A larger party, requiring more room, may obtain excellent apartments at from 20 louis a month upwards, according to the situation, the conveniences, the taste and condition of the furniture, and other contingencies. To prevent subsequent misunderstanding, I would always recommend a written agreement.

The English have hitherto paid dearer than other foreigners for whatever they want in Paris, because they generally trust to their servants, and think it beneath them to look into those matters connected with their own comfort. But the *Milords Anglais* are now entirely eclipsed by the Russian Counts, who give two

louis where the English offer one. A person's expenses here, as every where else, materially depend on good management, without which a thoughtless man squanders twice as much as a more considerate one; and while the former obtains no more than the common comforts of life, the latter enjoys all its indulgences.

With respect to the gratifications of the table, I have little to add to what I have already said on that subject, in speaking of the *restaurateurs*. If you choose to become a boarder, you may subscribe at the *Hôtel du Cirque*, *Rue de la Loi*, and sit down every day in good company for about seven louis a month; and there are very respectable private houses, where you may, when once introduced, dine very well for five livres a time; but, at all these places, you are sure to meet either English or Americans; and the consequence is, that you are eternally speaking your mother-tongue, which is a material objection with those who are anxious to improve themselves in the French language. For a man who brings his family to Paris, and resides in private apartments, it might, perhaps, be more advisable to hire a cook, and live *à l'Anglaise* or *à la Française*, according to his fancy.

No conveniences have been so much improved in Paris, since the revolution, as

JOB AND HACKNEY CARRIAGES.

Formerly, the *remises* or job-carriages were far inferior to those in use at the present day; and the old *fiacres* or hackney-coaches were infamous. The carriages themselves were filthy; the horses, wretched; and the coachmen, in tatters, had more the look of beggars than that of drivers.

Now, not only good hackney-coaches, but chariots and cabriolets likewise, figure here on the stands; and many of them have an appearance so creditable that they might even be taken for private French equipages. The regular stipulated fare of all these vehicles is at present 30 *sous* a *course*, and the same for every hour after the first, which is fixed at 40 *sous*.* In 1789, it used to be no more than 24. For the 30 *sous*, you may drive from one extremity of Paris to the other, provided you do not stop by the way; for every voluntary stoppage is reckoned a *course*. However, if you have far to go, it is better to agree to pay 40 *sous* per hour, and then you

* When assignats were in circulation, a single *course en fiacre* sometimes cost 600 livres, which was at the rate of 10 livres per minute. But this will not appear extraordinary, when it is known that the depreciation of that paper-currency was such that, at one time, 18,000 livres in assignats could be procured for a single *louis d'or*.

meet with no contradiction. From midnight to six o'clock in the morning, the fare is double.

The present expense of a job-carriage, with a good pair of horses, (including the coachman, who is always paid by the jobman) varies from 22 to 24 louis a month, according to the price of forage. If you use your own carriage, the hire of horses and coachman will cost you from 12 to 15 louis, which, in 1789, was the price of a job-carriage, all expenses included.

Under the old *régime*, there were no stands of cabriolets.* These carriages are very convenient to persons pressed for time; but it must be confessed that they are no small annoyance to pedestrians. Of this Lewis XV was so convinced, that he declared if he were Minister of the Police, he would suffer no cabriolets in Paris. He thought this prohibition beneath his own greatness. To obviate, in some measure, the danger arising both from the want of foot-pavement, and from the inconsiderate rapidity with which these carriages are not unfrequently driven, it is now a law that the neck of every horse in a cabriolet must be provided with bells, and the carriage with two lamps, lighted after dark; yet, in spite of these precautions, and the severity which

* A cabriolet is a kind of one-horse chaise, with a standing head, and inclosed in front by a wooden flap, in lieu of one of leather. Behind, there is a place for a footman.

the police exercises against those who transgress the decree, serious accidents sometimes happen.

Before the revolution, "*gare! gare!*" was the only warning given here to foot-passengers. The master, in his cabriolet, first drove over a person, the servant behind then bawled out "*gare!*" and the maimed pedestrian was left to get up again as he was able. Such brutal negligence now meets with due chastisement.

At a trial which took place here the other day in a court of justice, the driver of a cabriolet was condemned to three months imprisonment in a house of correction, and to pay a fine of 100 francs for maiming a carter. The horse had no bells, as prescribed by law; and the owner of the cabriolet was, besides, condemned, in conjunction with the driver, to pay an indemnification of 3000 francs to the wounded carter, as being civilly responsible for the conduct of his servant.

Notwithstanding the danger of walking in the streets of Paris, such French women as are accustomed to go on foot, traverse the most frequented thoroughfares in the dirtiest weather, at the same time displaying, to the astonished sight of bespattered foreigners, a well-turned leg, a graceful step, and spotless stockings.

If you arrive in Paris without a servant, or (what amounts almost to the same thing) should you

bring with you a man ignorant of the French language, you may be instantly accommodated with one or several domestics, under the name of

VALETS-DE-PLACE.

Like every thing else here, the wages of these job-servants are augmented. Formerly, their salary was 36 or 40 *sous* a day: they now ask 4 francs; but, if you purpose to spend a few weeks here, will be glad to serve you for 3. Some are very intelligent; others, very stupid. Most of them are spies of the police; but, as an Englishman in Paris has nothing to conceal, of what consequence is it whether his steps are watched by his own *valet-de-place* or any other *mouchard?* It is usual for them to lay under contribution all the tradesmen you employ; and thus the traiteur, the jobman, &c. contribute to augment their profits. However, if they pilfer you a little themselves, they take care that you are not subjected to too much imposition from others.—To proceed to a few

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

In visiting the French capital, many Englishmen are led into an error. They imagine that a few letters of recommendation will be the means of procuring them admission into other houses besides those of the persons to whom

these letters are addressed. But, on their arrival in Paris, they will find themselves mistaken. The houses of the *great* are difficult of access, and those of the secondary class scarcely open with more ease than they did before the revolution. If proper attention be paid to all the letters which a stranger brings, he may be satisfied; though the persons to whom he is recommended, seldom think of taking him to the residence of any of their friends. Therefore, an English traveller, who wishes to mix much in French society, should provide himself with as many letters of recommendation as he can possibly obtain; unless, indeed, he has a celebrated name, which, in all countries, is the best introduction; for curiosity prompts the higher classes to see and examine the man who bears it. The doors of every house will be open to him, when they are shut against other strangers, and he may soon establish an intimacy in the first circles. To those who possess not that advantage, a Frenchman may be induced to offer a dinner, or two, perhaps, and return them a few formal visits. He will profess more than he performs. In a word, he will be polite, but not familiar and friendly.

An Englishman, thus circumstanced, finding that he gains no ground, and is treated with a sort of ceremony, will probably seek other com-

pany, dine at the *restaurateurs*', frequent the *spectacles*, and visit the impures: for such was the life our countrymen, in general, led in Paris before the revolution. Public amusements may, perhaps, make him amends for the want of private society. As, from their astonishing number, they may be varied without end, he may contrive to pass away his evenings. His mornings will, at first, be employed, no doubt, in visiting public curiosities; but, after he has repeatedly surveyed these scenes of attraction, he will fail in what ought to be the grand object of foreign travel, and return home without having acquired a competent knowledge of the manners of the country. He ought therefore to husband proper French acquaintances, and keep up a constant intercourse with them, or he will run a risk of finding himself insulated. Should indisposition confine him to the house for a few days, every one to whom he has been recommended, will suppose him gone; he will no longer be thought of; *ennui* will take possession of him, and, cursing France, he will wish himself safely landed on the shore of Old England.

If this is the case with an Englishman who brings letters to Paris, what must be the situation of one who visits this capital entirely unprovided in that respect? The banker on whom he has a letter of credit, may invite him to a

dinner, at which are assembled twenty persons, to all of whom he is a perfect stranger. Without friends, without acquaintances, he will find himself like a man dropped from the clouds, amidst six or seven hundred thousand persons, driving or walking about in pursuit of their affairs or pleasures. For want of a proper clue to direct him, he is continually in danger of falling into the most detestable company; and the temptations to pleasure are so numerous and so inviting in this gay city, that it requires more fortitude than falls to the lot of many to resist them. Consequently, an untravelled foreigner cannot be too much on his guard in Paris; for it will require every exertion of his prudence and discrimination to avoid being duped and cheated. Above all, he should shun those insinuating and subtle characters who, dexterous in administering that delicious essence which mixes so sweetly with the blood, are ever ready to shew him the curiosities, and introduce him into coteries, which they will represent as respectable, and in which the mistress of the house and her daughters will, probably, conspire to lighten his pocket, and afterwards laugh at his credulity.

As to the reception which the English are likely to meet with here after the ratification of the definitive treaty, (if I may be permitted to judge from personal experience and observa-

tion) I think it will, in a great measure, depend on themselves. Therefore, should any of our countrymen complain of being treated here with less attention now than before the revolution, it will, on candid investigation, prove to be their own fault. The essential difference will be found to consist in the respect paid to the man, not, as formerly, in proportion to his money, but to his social worth. The French seem now to make a distinction between individuals only, not between nations. Whence it results that, *cæteris paribus*, the foreigner who possesses most the talent of making himself agreeable in society, will here be the most welcome. Not but, in general, they will shew greater indulgence to an Englishman, and be inclined to overlook in him that which they would consider as highly unpardonable in a stranger of any other country.

On such occasions, their most usual exclamation is "*Les Anglais sont des gens bien ex-*" *traordinaires! Ma foi! ils sont inconcevables!*" And, indeed, many Englishmen appear to glory in justifying the idea, and *astonishing the natives* by the eccentricity of their behaviour. But these *originals* should recollect that what may be tolerated in a man of superior talent, is ridiculous, if not contemptible, in one undistinguished by such a pretension; and that, by thus

posting their absurdities to the eyes of a foreign nation, they leave behind them an impression which operates as a real injury in regard to their more rational countrymen. Another circumstance deserves no less animadversion.

In their first essay of foreign travel, our British youths generally carry with them too ample a share of national prepossession and presumption. Accustomed at home to bear down all before them by the weight of their purse, they are too apt to imagine that, by means of a plentiful provision of gold, they may lord it over the continent, from Naples to Petersburg; and that a profuse expenditure of money supersedes the necessity of a compliance with established forms and regulations. Instead of making their applications and inquiries in a proper manner, so as to claim due attention, they more frequently demand as a right what they should rather receive as a favour. Finding themselves disappointed in their vain conclusions, their temper is soured; and, being too proud to retract their error, or even observe a prudent silence, they deal out their impertinence and abuse in proportion to the number of guineas which they may be able to squander. Of course, they cannot but view the peculiar habits and customs of all foreign nations with a jaundiced eye, never reflecting that in most countries are to be found,

either in a moral or a physical sense, advantages and disadvantages in which others are deficient. *Le* POUR *et le* CONTRE, as a well-known traveller observes, *se trouvent en chaque nation.* The grand desideratum is to acquire by travel a knowledge of this POUR *et* CONTRE, which, by emancipating us from our prejudices, teaches us mutual toleration—for, of every species of tyranny, that which is exercised on things indifferent in themselves, is the most intolerable. Hence it is less difficult to deprive a nation of its laws than to change its habits.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Paris, March 31, 1802.

IF I mistake not, I have answered most of the questions contained in your letters; I shall now reply to you on the subject of

DIVORCE.

The number of divorced women to be met with here, especially among the more affluent classes, exceeds any moderate calculation. Nothing can more clearly manifest the necessity of erecting some dike against the torrent of immorality, which has almost inundated this

capital, and threatens to spread over all the departments.

Before the revolution, the indissolubility of marriage in France was supposed to promote adultery in a very great degree: the vow was broken because the knot could not be untied. At present, divorces are so easily obtained, that a man or woman, tired of each other, have only to plead *incompatibility of temper*, in order to slip their necks out of the matrimonial noose. In short, some persons here change their wedded partner with as much unconcern as they do their linen. Thus, the two extremes touch each other; and either of them has proved equally pernicious to morals.

Formerly, if a Frenchman kept a watchful eye on his wife, he was reckoned jealous, and was blamed. If he adopted a contrary conduct, and she was faithless, he was ridiculed. Not unfrequently, a young miss, emerged from the cloisters of a convent, where she had, perhaps, been sequestered, in order that her bloom might not eclipse the declining charms of her mother, and who appeared timid, bashful, and diffident, was no sooner married to a man in a certain rank in life, than she shone as a meteor of extravagance and dissipation. Such a wife thought of nothing but the gratification of her own desires; because she considered it as

a matter of course that all the cares of the family ought to devolve by right on the husband. Provided she could procure the means of satisfying her taste for dress, and of making a figure in the *beau monde*, no other concerns ever disturbed her imagination. If, at first, she had sufficient resolution to resist the contagion of example, and not take a male friend to her bosom, by way of lightening the weight of her connubial chains, she seldom failed, in the end, to follow the fashion of the day, and frequent the gaming-table, where her virtue was sacrificed to discharge her debts of honour.

But what have these *would-be* republicans to allege as an excuse in their favour? They have no convents to initiate young girls in the arts of dissimulation; no debauched court to contaminate, by its example, the wavering principles of the weak part of the sex, or sap the more determined ones of those whose mind is of a firmer texture; nor have they any friendly, sympathizing confessors to draw a sponge, as it were, over the trespasses hid in a snug corner of their heart. No: every one is left to settle his own account with heaven. Yet the libertinism which at present reigns in Paris is sufficient to make a deep impression on persons the least given to reflection.

Il matrimonio, says the Italian proverb, *è un*

paradiso o un inferno. In fact, nothing can be compared to the happiness of a married couple, united by sympathy. To them, marriage is really a terrestrial paradise. But what more horrid than the reverse, that is, two beings cursing the fatal hour which brought them together in wedlock? It is a very hell on earth; for surely no punishment can exceed that of being condemned to pass our days with the object of our detestation.

If the indissolubility of marriage in France was formerly productive of such bad consequences; now that the nuptial knot can be loosened with so much facility, there can no longer exist the same plea for adultery. Is then this accumulation of vice less the effect of the institution of divorce in itself, than that of the undigested law by which it was first introduced?

The law of divorce was, I find, projected in 1790, under the auspices of the last Duke of Orleans, who, utterly regardless of the welfare of the State, wished to revolutionize every thing, solely with a view to his own individual interest. His object was to get rid of his wife, who was a woman of strict virtue. This law was decreed on the 20th of September 1792, without any discussion whatever. On the 8th of Nivôse and 4th of Floréal, year II, (29th of

December 1794 and 24th of April 1795) the Convention decreed additional laws, all tending to favour the impetuosity of the passions. Thus the door was opened still wider to licentiousness and debauchery. By these laws, an absence of six months is sufficient for procuring a divorce, and, after the observance of certain forms, either of the parties may contract a fresh marriage.

It is not difficult to conceive how many hot-headed, profligate, unprincipled persons, of both sexes, have availed themselves of such laws to gratify their unruly passions, their resentment, their avarice, or their ambition. Oaths, persons, or property, are, in these cases, little respected. If a libertine finds that he cannot possess the object of his desires on any other terms, like Sir John Brute, in the play, he marries her, in order to go to bed to her, and in a few days sues for a divorce. I have been shewn here a Lothario of this description, who, in the course of a short space of time had been married to no less than six different women.

"Divorce," says a judicious French writer, "is a separation, the necessity for which ought "to be supported by unquestionable proofs; "otherwise, it is nothing more than a legiti-"mate scandal."

The French often wish to assimilate themselves to the Romans, and the Roman laws

sanctioned divorce. Let us then examine how far the comparison can, in this respect, be supported.

" Among the Romans," continues he, " the " first who availed himself of this privilege was " Spurius Corbilius, because his wife was steril. " The second divorce was that of C. Sulpicius, " because his wife had gone abroad with her " hair uncovered, and without a veil over her " head. Q. Anstitius divorced on account of " having seen his wife speak to a person of " her own sex, who was reckoned loose in her " conduct; and Sempronius, because his had " been to see the public entertainments without " having informed him. These different di- " vorces took place about a hundred years after " the foundation of Rome. The Romans, after " that, were upwards of five hundred years " without affording an instance of any divorce. " They then were moral and virtuous. But, " at length, luxury, that scourge of societies, " corrupted their hearts; and divorces became " so frequent, that many women reckoned their " age by the number of their husbands." To this he might have added, that several Roman ladies of rank were so lost to all sense of shame, that they publicly entered their names among the licensed prostitutes.

" Marriage," concludes he, " presently be-

" came nothing more than an object of com-
" merce and speculation; and divorce, a tacit
" permission for libertinism. Can divoree among
" the French, be considered otherwise, when
" we refleet that this institution, whieh seemed
" likely to draw eloser the conjugal tie, by re-
" storing it to its state of natural liberty, is,
" through the abuse made of it, now only a
" mean of shameful traffic, in whieh the more
" cunning of the two ruins the other, in short,
" a mound the less against the irruptions of
" immorality?"

So mueh for the opinion of a French writer of estimation on the effect of these laws: let us at present endeavour to illustrate it by some examples.

A young lady, sedueed by a married man, found herself pregnant. She was of a respeetable family: he was rich, and felt the consequenees of this event. What was to be done? He goes to one of his friends, whom he knew not to be overburdened with delicacy, and proposes to him to marry this young person, in consideration of a eertain sum of money. The friend consents, and the only question is to settle the conditions. They bargain for some time: at last they agree for 10,000 franes *(circa* £410 sterling). The marriage is concluded, the lady is brought to bed, the child dies, and

the gentleman sues for a divorce. All this was accomplished in six months. As such opportunities are by no means scarce, he may, in the course of the year, probably, meet with another of the same nature: thus the office of bridegroom is converted into a lucrative situation. The following is another instance of this melancholy truth, but of a different description.

A man about thirty-two years of age, well-made, and of a very agreeable countenance, had been married three months to a young woman of uncommon beauty. He was loved, nay almost adored by her. Every one might have concluded that they were the happiest couple in Paris; and, in fact, no cloud had hitherto overshadowed the serenity of their union. One day when the young bride was at table with her husband, indulging herself in expressing the happiness which she enjoyed, a tipstaff entered, and delivered to her a paper. She read it. What should it be but a subpœna for a divorce? At first she took the thing for a pleasantry: but the husband soon convinced her that nothing was more serious. He assured her that this step would make her fortune, and his own too, if she would consent to the arrangement which he had to propose to her. "You know," said he, "the rich and ugly Madame C——: "she has 30,000 francs a year *(circa* £1250

" sterling); she will secure to me the half of " her property, provided I will marry her. I " offer you a third, if, after having willingly " consented to our divorce, you will permit me " to see you as my female friend." Such a proposal shocked her at the moment; but a week's reflection effected a change in her sentiments; and the business was completed. *O tempora! O mores!*

But though many married individuals still continue to break their chains, it appears that divorces are gradually decreasing in number; and should the government succeed in introducing into the law on this subject the necessary modifications, of course they will become far less frequent.

Every legislature must be aware to what a degree plays are capable of influencing the opinions of a nation, and what a powerful spring they are for moving the affections. Why then are not theatrical representations here so regulated, that the stage may conduce to the amelioration of morals? Instead of this, in most French comedies, the husband is generally made the butt of ridicule, and the whole plot often lies in his being outwitted by some conceited spark. Marriage, in short, is incessantly railed at in such a lively, satirical manner as to delight nine-tenths of the audience.

This custom was also introduced on our stage under the reign of Charles II; and, not many years ago, it was, I am told, as usual to play *The London Cuckolds* on Lord Mayor's day, as it is now to give a representation of *George Barnwell* during the Easter holidays. Yet, what is this practice of exhibiting a cuckold in a ridiculous point of view, but an apology for adultery, as if it was intended to teach women that their charms are not formed for the possession of one man only? Alas! it is but too true that some of the French belles need no encouragement to infidelity: too soon all scruple is stifled in their bosom; and then, they not only set modesty, but decency too at defiance. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute*; or, as the same idea is more fully expressed by our great moral poet:

> "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> "As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
> "Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> "We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

However, in both the instances which I have adduced, the fault was entirely on the side of the men; and, in general, I believe this will prove to be the case. Recrimination, indeed, is loudly urged by our sex in Paris; they blame the women, with a view of extenuating their own irregularities, which scarcely know any limits.

On a question of a divorce-bill brought on, not long since, in the House of Commons, you may recollect that a member was laughed at, for asserting that if men expected women to reform, they ought to begin by reforming themselves. For my part, I conceive the idea to be perfectly just. Infidelity on the woman's side is, unquestionably, more hurtful to society than a failure of the same sort on the man's; yet, is it reasonable to suppose women to be so exempt from human frailty, as to preserve their chastity inviolate, when men set them so bad an example?

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Paris, April 3, 1802.

Circumstances have at length occurred to recall me to England, and as this will, probably, be the last letter that you will receive from me before I have the pleasure of taking you by the hand, I shall devote it to miscellaneous subjects, and, without studying any particular arrangement, speak of them at random, just as they chance to present themselves.

A fellow-creature, whose care-worn countenance and emaciated body claimed a mite from any one who had a mite to bestow, had taken

his stand at the gate-way just now as I entered. The recollection of his tale of woe being uppermost in my mind, I begin with

MENDICANTS.

In spite of the calamities which all great political convulsions never fail to engender, the streets of Paris present not at this day that vast crowd of beggars, covered with rags and vermin, by which they were formerly infested. This is to be attributed to the partial adoption of measures for employing the poor; and, doubtless, when receptacles come to be established here, according to the salutary plans introduced into Bavaria by Count Rumford, mendicity will be gradually annihilated.

But, if beggars have decreased in Paris, this is not the case with

PAWNBROKERS.

They seem to have multiplied in proportion to the increase of the number of opportunities afforded for gambling in the lottery, that is, in the ratio of 21 to 2.*

* Since the revolution, the Paris lottery is drawn three times in each month, in lieu of twice; and lotteries have also been established in the principal towns of the Republic, namely; Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Rouen, Strasburg, and

Formerly, in addition to the public establishment called the *Mont de Piété*, commissioners were appointed, in different parts of the town, to take in pledges, and make advances on them previously to their being lodged in that grand repository. There, money was lent on them at an interest of 10 per cent; and if the article pledged was not redeemed by a certain time, it was sold by public auction, and, the principal and interest being deducted, the surplus was paid to the holder of the duplicate. Thus the iniquitous projects of usury were defeated; and the rich, as well as the poor, went to borrow at the *Mont de Piété*. To obtain a sum for the discharge of a debt of honour, a dutchess here deposited her diamond ear-rings; while a washerwoman slipped off her petticoat, and pawned it to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

At the present moment, the *Mont de Piété* still exists; but, doubtless, on a different plan; for Paris abounds with *Maisons de prêt*. On the eve of particular days in each month when the shopkeepers' promissory notes become due, they here pledge articles in order to procure the means of making good their payments. But the crowd of borrowers is the greatest on the

Brussels. The offices in the capital present the facility of gambling in all these different lotteries as often every month as in that of Paris.

days immediately preceding those on which the Paris lottery is drawn; the hucksters, market-women, porters, retailers of fruit, and unfortunate females, then deposit their wearing apparel at these dens of rapacity, that they may acquire a share of a ticket, the price of which is fixed so low as to be within the purchase of the poorest classes.

The lottery being over, till the next drawing, those persons think no more of their effects, provided they are within two or three of the winning numbers; and thus they gamble away almost every thing belonging to them, even to the very clothes on their back. This is so true that it is not, I understand, at all uncommon in Paris, for a Cyprian nymph to send her last robe to the nearest pawnbroker's, in order to have the chance of a prize in the lottery, and to lie in bed till she obtains the means of purchasing another. Nor is this by far the worst part of the story.

The too credulous followers of Fortune, on finding all their hopes of success blasted, frequently seek a termination of their misery by suicide: and a person of veracity, who made a point of visiting the *Morne* almost daily, assured me that he always knew when the lottery had just been drawn, by the increased number of dead bodies, there exposed, of persons who had put an end to their existence.

These are facts shocking to relate; but, if

legislators will promote gaming, either by lotteries, or in any other manner, such are the consequences to be expected.

Another article which has multiplied prodigiously in Paris, since the revolution, consists of

NEWSPAPERS.

In 1789, the only daily papers in circulation here were the *Journal de Paris* and the *Petites Affiches*; for the *Gazette de France* appeared only twice a week. From that period, these ephemeral productions increased so rapidly, that, under the generic name of *Journaux*, upwards of six thousand, bearing different titles, have appeared in France, five hundred of which were published in Paris.

At this time, here is a great variety of daily papers. The most eminent of these are well known in England; such as the *Moniteur*, the only official paper, the sale of which is said to be 20,000 per day; that of the *Journal de Paris*, 16,000; of the *Publiciste*, 14,000; of the *Journal des Débats*, 12,000; of the *Journal des Défenseurs de la Patrie*, 10,000; and of the *Clé du Cabinet*, 6,000. The sale of the others is comparatively trifling, with the exception of the *Petites Affiches*, of which the number daily sold exceeds 30,000.

In addition to the *Journals*, which I mentioned in my letter of the 16th of December

last, the most esteemed are the *Magazin Encyclopédique*, edited by MILLIN, the *Annales de Chimie*, the *Journal des Arts*, the *Journal Polytechnique*, the *Journal des Mines*, the *Journal général des Inventions et des Découvertes*, &c. I stop here, because it would be useless to attempt to send you a complete list of all the French periodical publications, as, in the flux and reflux of this literary ocean, such a list cannot long be expected to preserve its exactness.

Among the conveniences which this city affords in an enviable degree and in great abundance, are

BATHS.

Those of Paris, of every description, still retain their former pre-eminence. The most elegant are the *Bains Chinois* on the north Boulevards, where, for three francs, you may enjoy the pleasure of bathing in almost as much luxury as an Asiatic monarch. Near the *Temple* and at the *Vauxhall d'Été*, also on the old Boulevards, are baths, where you have the advantage of a garden to saunter in after bathing.

On the Seine are several floating baths, the most remarkable of which are the *Bains Vigier*, at the foot of the *Pont National*. The vessel containing them is upwards of 200 feet in length by about 60 in breadth, and presents two tiers of baths, making, on both decks, 140 in number.

It is divided in the middle by a large transparent plate of glass, which permits the eye to embrace its whole extent; one half of which is appropriated to men; the other, to women. On each deck are galleries, nine feet wide, ornamented with much architectural taste. On the exterior part of the vessel is a promenade, decorated with evergreens, orange and rose trees, jasmines, and other odoriferous plants. By means of a hydraulic machine, worked by two horses, in an adjoining barge, the reservoirs can be emptied and filled again in less than an hour.

The *Bains Vigier* are much frequented, as you may suppose from their daily consumption of two cords of wood for fuel. Tepid baths, at blood-heat, are, at present, universally used by the French ladies, and, apparently, with no small advantage. The price of one of these is no more than 30 *sous*, linen, &c. included.

If you want to learn to swim, you may be instructed here in that necessary art, or merely take a look at those acquiring it, at the

SCHOOL OF NATATION.

The Seine is the school where the lessons are given, and the police takes care that the pupils infringe not the laws of decency.

It is certain that, as far back as the year 1684, means were proposed in London to transmit signs to a great distance in a very short space of time, and that, towards the close of the seventeenth century, a member of the Academy of Sciences made, near Paris, several minute experiments on the same subject. The paper read at the Royal Society of London, and the detail of the experiments made in France, seem to suggest nearly the same means as those now put in practice, by the two nations, with respect to

TELEGRAPHS.

The construction of those in France differs from ours in consisting of one principal pole, and two arms, moveable at the ends. There are four in Paris; one, on the *Louvre*, which corresponds with Lille; another, on the *Place de la Concorde*, with Brest; a third, on one of the towers of the church of *St. Sulpice*, with Strasburg; and the fourth, on the other tower of the said church, which is meant to extend to Nice, but is as yet carried no farther than Dijon. To and from Lille, which is 120 leagues distant from Paris, intelligence is conveyed and received in six minutes, three for the question, and three for the answer.

Yet, however expeditious this intercourse may

seem, it is certain that the telegraphic language may be abridged, by preserving these machines in their present state, but at the same time allotting to each of the signs a greater portion of idea, without introducing any thing vague into the signification.

Independently of the public curiosities, which I have described, Paris contains several

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS.

Among them, those most deserving of attention are:

ADANSON's cabinet of Natural History, *Rue de la Victoire.*

CASAS' cabinet of Models and Drawings, *Rue de Seine, Faubourg St. Germain.*

CHARLES's cabinet of Physics, *Palais National des Sciences et des Arts.*

DENON's cabinet of Drawings, &c. *Hôtel de Bouillon, Rue J. J. Rousseau.*

FOUQUET's cabinet of Models of Antique Monuments, *Rue de Lille, F. S. G.*

HAUPOIS' cabinet of Mechanics.

SUË's cabinet of Anatomy, *Rue du Luxembourg.*

TERSAN's cabinet of Antiquities, *Cloître St. Honoré.*

VAILLANT's cabinet of Birds, &c. *Rue du Sépulchre, F. S. G.*

VAN-HORREN's cabinet of Curiosities, *Rue St. Dominique, F. S. G.*

I must observe that, to visit these men of science, without putting them to inconvenience, it is expedient either to procure an introduction, or to address them a note, requesting permission to view their cabinet. This observation holds good with respect to every thing that is not public.

If you are fond of inspecting curious fire-arms, you should examine the *dépôt d'armes* of M. BOUTET in the *Rue de la Loi*, whose manufactory is at Versailles, and also pay a visit to M. REGNIER, at the *Dépôt Central de l'Artillerie, Rue de l'Université*, who is a very ingenious mechanic, and will shew you several curious articles of his own invention, such as a *dynamomètre*, by means of which you can ascertain and compare the relative strength of men, as well as that of horses and draught-cattle, and also judge of the resistance of machines, and estimate the moving power you wish to apply to them; a *potamomètre*, by which you can tell the force of running streams, and measure the currents of rivers. M. REGNIER has also invented different kinds of locks and padlocks, which cannot be picked; as well as some curious pistols, &c.

I have, as you will perceive, strictly confined myself to the limits of the capital, because I expect that my absence from it will not be long; and, in my next trip to France, I intend, not only to point out such objects as I may now have neglected, but also to describe those most worthy of notice in the environs of Paris.

If I have not spoken to you of all the metamorphoses occasioned here by the revolution, it is because several of them bear not the stamp of novelty. If the exchange in Paris is now held in the *ci-devant Eglise des Petits Pères*, did we not at Boston, in New England, convert the meeting-houses and churches into riding-schools and barracks?

As the *Charnier des Innocens*, which had subsisted in the centre of Paris for upwards of eight centuries, and received the remains of at least ten millions of human beings, was, before the revolution, turned into a market-place; so is the famous spot where the Jacobin convent stood in the *Rue St. Honoré*, and whence issued laws more bloody than those of Draco, now on the point of being appropriated to a similar destination. The cemetery of St. Sulpice is transformed into a Ranelagh. Over the entrance is written, in large letters, encircled by roses, "BAL DES ZÉPHYRS," and, underneath, you read:

" *Has ultra metas requiescunt*
" *Beatam spem expectantes.*"

And on the door itself:

" *Expectantes misericordiam Dei.*"

I was just going to conclude with *Adieu till we meet*, when I was most agreeably surprised by the receipt of your letter. I am happy to find that, through the kind attention of Mr. Mantell of Dover, whose good offices on this and other similar occasions claim my most grateful acknowledgments, you have received all the packets and books which I have addressed to you during my present visit to Paris. It is likewise no small gratification to me to learn that my correspondence has afforded to you a few subjects of deep reflection.

As I told you at the time, the task which you imposed on me was more than I could accomplish; and you must now be but too well convinced that the apprehension of my inability was not unfounded. It may not, perhaps, be difficult for a man of sound judgment to seize and delineate the general progress of the human mind during a determined period; but to follow successively, through all their details, the ramifications of the arts and sciences, is a labour which requires much more knowledge and

experience than I can pretend to: nor did self-love ever blind me so far as to lead me to presume, for a moment, that success would crown my efforts.

However, I think I have said enough to shew that one of the striking effects of the revolution has been to make the arts and sciences popular in France. It has rendered common those doctrines which had till then been reserved for first-rate *savans* and genuises. The arsenals of the sciences (if I may use the expression) were filled; but soldiers were wanting. The revolution has produced them in considerable numbers; and, in spite of all the disasters and evils which it has occasioned, it cannot be denied that the minds of Frenchmen, susceptible of the least energy, have here received a powerful impulse which has urged them towards great and useful ideas. This impulse has been kept alive and continued by the grand establishments of public instruction, founded during the course of that memorable period. Thus, in a few words, you are at once in possession both of the causes and the result of the progress of the human mind in this country.

You may, probably, be surprised that I could have written so much, in so short a space of time, amid all the allurements of the French capital, and the variety of pursuits which must

necessarily have diverted my attention. Perhaps too, you may think that I might have dwelt less on some of my least interesting details. I must confess that I have, in some measure, subjected myself to such an opinion; but, knowing your wish to acquire every sort of information, I have exerted myself to obtain it from all quarters. To collect this budget has been no easy task; to compress it would have been still more difficult, and, alas! to have transmitted it, in an epistolary form, would have been totally out of my power, but for the assistance of two very ingenious artists, who have not a little contributed to lighten my labour. Introducing themselves to me, very shortly after my arrival, the one furnished me with an everlasting pen; and the other, with an inexhaustible inkstand.

Farewell, my good friend. I have obtained a passport for England. My baggage is already packed up. To-morrow I shall devote to the ceremony of making visits *p. p. c.* that is, *pour prendre congé* of my Parisian friends; and, on the day after, *(Deo volente)* I shall bid adieu to the "paradise of "women, the purgatory of men, and the hell "of horses."

THE END.

☞ *The new organization of the National Institute, referred to in page* 104 *of this volume, will be found among the prefaratory matter in Vol. I, immediately preceding the Introduction.*

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